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MYSTERIES
OF INDIA

By the same Author

THE VOICE OF THE ORIENT
CITIES SEEN
PAGES FROM THE LIFE OF A PAGAN

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THE MYSTERY OF REINCARNATION.

As a man casting off worn-out garments taketh new ones,
so the dweller in the body passeth on to another body.

BHAGAVAD GITA, DISCOURSE II. 13.

VEILED MYSTERIES OF INDIA

By

MRS. WALTER TIBBITS

Unto you it is given to know the Mysteries.
Write the things which thou hast seen.

LONDON
EVELEIGH NASH & GRAYSON
LIMITED
1929

First Published 1929

To

My Husband of Two Worlds

Others may find their loves and keep them,
But for us two there still shall be
A kinder heart and a fairer city,
The home and hearth we shall never see.
Lost adventurers, watching ever
Over the toss of the tricksy foam,
Many a joyous port and city,
Never the harbour lights of home.

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VEILED MYSTERIES OF INDIA

VIGNETTES

Ships that come back from the sea,
  From the land beyond sight,
Tell us what tales there may be
  Of the wave and the wind and the fight!

ERIC CHILMAN.

AN adventuress by nature, the latter-day product of an "Adventurer,"* my adventures have been of many sorts.

In a wandering career a large part of my life has been spent in hotels. But wherever I slept, in hotel, ship, or tent, I always arranged a little *chapelle ardente* in my room where I could offer flowers to my Pagan Gods. What strange blooms have been brought me all over the world to lay before Them! Maharanis, gleaming in pearls and emeralds, have brought me magnolias, creamy, dreamy petals diffusing languorous sweetness on the stifling air. Brahmanas, in the antelope skins of Shiv, have plucked for me on the

* I am directly descended from Captain George Pepper, "The Adventurer." Since this was written Ballygarth Castle has passed out of the direct line of the Peppers after three centuries. A line whose legend was played before Queen Victoria. This book is, perhaps, the last flicker of the candle. It seems that the last Colonel Pepper was refused by a Lambart and never loved again. It was Rose Lambart, granddaughter of the first Lord Cavan, who, two hundred years ago, brought us their Tipperary estates of Lisaniskea and founded our branch, so that the Lambarts have brought us both life and death.

snow-line of Himavat rich purple columbines the size of cups, and lilies, green, evil, treacherous, whose blood-stained interiors mocked the whiteness of the snowy wastes. Italian cavalrymen, impulsive, amorous, have offered me exotics in the dim streets of Dante, before they went forth to die. Australian squatters, on the rocks of Malta, have gilded my corner of the old Knights' auberge with the golden narcissus and painted it with the vermilion of anemones ere they passed to death as sure, if slower, mid the febrile horrors of Mesopotamian swamps. Parisiennes of uncanny fascination have given me carnations, crimson as their lips, below the gleaming snake-like eyes. And unhappy decadents of a new Satyricon have offered me orchids because I had " the clearer vision " that forgave.

And I have sat upon a sofa beside the most sumptuous of Europe's queens, the *Marguerite des Marguerites*, whose royal lips have voiced her yearnings for the spiritual mysteries of the East.

And floating on the Bay of Viareggio, I have heard the bells of Kashi as fishermen heard the bells of the buried City of Is. With ears closed to clatter of smart crowds by gurgle of pine-perfumed ripples, I heard the bells indeed and in truth, as though in the Holy City Herself. Sunsets turned the waters to Whistlers in creamy grey and molten gold, while young exquisites in lilac and lemon silk pyjamas patrolled the beach, but never braved the waves.

And I have been surprised to sense the Shiv influence

sweet, keen, all-powerful, on the Campagna air. It poured from a house, high-walled, mysterious, to enter which means, *ipso facto*, excommunication for a woman. The door of Camoldoli, the severest order of monks of silence. Some rich, a bishop newly joined, all work and pray alike.

And I have prayed in many places. In the mystic temples of Shiv at Benares, frequented by adepts, black and white, where the evil sorcerers creep at dead of midnight, lighted only by the miniature lamps on Gunga's breast. Where the hurrying footsteps of the white magicians resound through Kashi's mazy aisle at daybreak. Dressed as a Shivite yogini, I have left the temple courtyard, with the marble bulls of Mahadev, and descended the flights of eternal stairs sweeping down to meet the Holy River's waves. There sits the semicircle of orange-clad sannyasis with their brown, prickly rosaries, while is read the Shiva Sutra beside the sacred waters. By the Georgian Catholic Church of Calcutta, I have begged the prayers of *religieuses* in a convent once the sanctuary of Madame Grand. In Italy I have heard the colour chords struck by the majestic harmonies of the Renaissance giant masters and watched the candles flicker from the golden pulpit of St. Mark's at Venice on the mosaics of a thousand years, as when the Doges listened to the crimson Cardinal and the great square was filled with the madness of the whole earth.

And in Malta's forts, covered by the magenta sheets of crude creepers, I have seen the shrines of plain soldier men,

devout in piety, who lavished gold and silver and colour on their more garish ideas of God.

And I have cried :

> You that saw men die,
> Wind and Stream ! Reply !
> After all our pain
> Does no trace remain,
> But flying
> Wings, and crying
> Fowl, and weeds and waters sighing ? *

These pages attempt to pass on the answer. They deal with mysteries extending through the torrid zone where tigers abound to the icy snows of Himavat.

* "To the Wadi."

THE MYSTERY OF THE LINK

To Members of the I.C.S

"Let the Englishman and the Indian accept a union which is so mysterious as to have in it something of the divine."—Address of the Marquess Curzon at Valedictory Dinner, by United Service Club, Calcutta.

"If I were a parent seeking a profession for my son, I think the first thing that I should do would be to cast my eye upon India, and this mainly for two reasons. In the first place, if my son went to India he would be doing something definite, practical, and of positive value to large masses of human beings at a time of life when in any other country or profession he would only be occupying a secondary and irresponsible position. In the second place, India opens up a field of honourable activity in the sphere of government greater than any in the world. It is open to any young man of character and ability who goes there, from whatever class he may be drawn, to rise to a position in that country, before he attains the age of fifty, in which he may be ruling, almost single-handed, a territory larger than that of many European kingdoms and exercising an authority greater than that of many European kings."—*Id.* to the Geographical Society.

"We look back upon our Indian career, be it long, as it has been or will be in the case of many who are here to-night, or relatively short as in mine, and we feel that we can never have such a life again, so crowded with opportunity, so instinct with duty, so touched with romance. We forget the rebuffs and the mortification; we are indifferent to the slander and the pain. Perhaps if we forget these, others will equally forget our shortcomings and mistakes. We remember only the noble cause for which we have worked together, the principles of truth and justice and righteousness for which we have contended, and the good, be it ever so little, that we have done. India becomes the lodestar of our memories as she has hitherto been of our duty. For us she can never again be the 'Land of Regrets.'"—*Id.* at Valedictory Dinner by United Service Club, Simla.

In ancient days India was ruled by initiate kings. Would not this ideal form of government be restored in the person of an administrator uniting the political gifts of an Antony MacDonnell to the spiritual insight of an Annie Besant? Would the Government dare to withhold the Viceroyalty from such a personage? Yet not one Indian civilian has so far declared himself a convert, in company with Akbar, Schopenhauer, and Hegel, to the Hindu religion.

It is the oldest and least adulterated of the faiths of the fifth, Aryan race. In quantity its adherents outnumber by many millions those of its daughter creeds. In quality they

have included the profoundest thinkers of both East and West.

These ideas are therefore commended especially to the attention of the "Heaven Born." In general I commend them to the man in the street in the hope that they may make his life easier to bear, his death easier to face.

Among the wonderful exhibits of the Great Exhibition of our time and Empire, there was one quiet corner which to thoughtful minds presented perhaps most food for reflection. The gorgeous productions of the East, the inventive brilliance of the West, paled to us in interest before the grey greens and beige tints of the South African Kopje.

There are five hundred varieties of the mesembrianthemum, of which Mr. Frith, their expert, has two hundred. They came here wrapped in charcoal to evade the damp. Some were like ducks' eggs among coloured pebbles ; others were like gravel (e.g. lithops, or window-plant) in gravelly soil, concealed by speckly brown tops to protect the soft green milky interior from Kaffirs who eat them in droughts. Mr. Frith has to sit down on the veldt and adapt his eyes, and then he discovers the plants all round him. "Tiger-claw" has protecting teeth. "Elephant's-foot," aged sometimes a thousand years, has immense brown nodules to conserve the delicate tubers from the climate of the creeper. Geranium plants become brown and horny in the desert.

An ancient padre, touring the Kopje with me, said "I had no idea plants adapted themselves to their surroundings

like this." "The one life runs through all these chameleon changes," I replied.

To show the working of the Good Law, to reveal the music oft hidden by the roaring voice of the Great Illusion, is the object of these lines.

PART I

MYSTERIES *EN ROUTE*

I

OF MARSEILLES

THE POWER HOUSE

The sand-martins were flying,
Flying around and crying;
Till late in the grey light
I watched their twisted flight;
I heard, and no more heard
Save the late gulls that cried
Down by the wave-lit darkness of ebb-tide.

JULY 16TH. Versailles. Saw, for the first time this season, the swifts or sand-martins encircling the lawns, evidently, sensible birds, trying their wings' strength in preparation for the long flight south and east Like the yellow snap-dragon on the grey walls of Oriel to its most gracious and glorious undergraduate, in spring, the swallow dives on the grass and roses herald the awakening of spiritual force in the autumnal flight eastward *des hirondelles du Trianon.*

September 20th. *En route* to Marseilles, in the Avignon country, saw the grass starred with pinky-mauve autumn crocus, the same that adorned the Japanese Dell in Hyde Park.

October 8th. Marseilles once more! Is it for us the

thousand-and-first night of the magical, electrical mysteries of Marseilles? We approach through thickets of silver and gold, quivering and shimmering above blue lakes, pass Avignon's papal, fortressed grandeur, and find ourselves once again in the Terminus Hotel.

We eat in a glass-house set in a garden of crimson flowers and golden leaves drifting by in an autumn swirl. There are salvias and clove and yellow carnations, and butterflies flit about in the heliotrope. This gracious atmosphere is only twenty-four hours away from the drizzle and slush and War Office red-tape of Southampton dock. The first touch of the South after years of shock and horror.

Has any of the world's hotels the electric, galvanic volts of this modest little house? The little crowd eating in the garden glass-house is the same as ever: the priests, the French officers, the English boy-and-girl couples who have just embarked in the boat of life. They land at this first port of call for eager youth bound for the new life in the old East, young and pretty women, men in their prime. All that we once were. It is also the landing-place for us who return, illusions fled. Too often to tear open in the self-same little hotel telegrams of horror. Reader, have you ever run a race with death? She who writes has, twice, and won, and once from this hotel. But one may not do that thrice. Next time the pale horse will win at a canter.

Marseilles is the most electrical of all French cities after Paris, a fever of rush and bustle, everyone on the move to

the utmost parts of the earth. The harbour's mazy meshes are a replica of Muirhead Bone's pen drawings of them. As I sit up in bed, my black widow's jacket sombre above the golden quilt, I see the twin gothic, serrated spires of the cathedral rise above the rich platane* avenues. They have long slit-like windows showing the light through, like St. Peter's at Rome.

But high on her pinnacle, in the morning sunlight, Marie La Garde glints all gold above the mist wreaths floating up from the sea. On dull days the mist wreaths swathe the virgin into a grey wraith. But always dominant on her pinnacle of the church on the high castellated summit with the oriental dome behind, always watching her mariners across the seas. High, so high! Far, far above the garish, up-and-down town with the red roofs! Always marking Marseilles as a town of sea-people who go down in ships.

Oh, Marie! Vierge et Mère! You who watch over the Mysteries of Marseilles! Does your mother's heart ever bleed for our anguish? For the black-veiled mothers of Marseilles and for us, who are voyagers here? Marie La Garde, sounding across the sweet waves, filling the air as the Duomo does at Firenze. In all my many travels round the Wide, Wide World I count this little hotel and Nedou's at Srinagar most dear. In that, frequented by taciturn travellers from the mystic Thibetan country, one feels the beat of Asia's heart, the most mysterious of

* Horse chestnut.

continents. In this the galvanic pulses of Europe beat the loudest. I have the greatest horror of Palais de Luxes, full of "Poules." The bouillabaisse is full of sea flavours and with tiny crabs for garnishing.

The intricate lozenges and patterns of all sorts of the giant iron Transbordeur Bridge, the two huge triangles of the suspension, hang over the old port and Cannebière. The bridge and the Virgin are the two dominant features of Marseilles. In the evening the sun sets like a golden lion couchant above the bridge, a gigantic red-gold ball sends wave after wave of golden mist towards the Virgin. High, so high above the other castellated, fort-like hills, that she needs a funicular railway to approach her. Grey and wraith-like against the pale evening sky, but always dominant, always insistent, always commanding, this woman, regal representative of matter, at the gate of material France.

After the accouchement of His Majesty the Logos He leaves a few rosy fleeces in the sky, like the Laughing Hours, to mark His path, till they also vanish, leaving the night tints behind them. A Whistler's nocturne in indigo with a thousand eyes of the night twinkling all over the place and even in the two little houses hanging in mid-air inside the two huge chain triangles suspended from wheels above. Last of all in this remarkable panorama of Marseilles, brilliant Venus and her satellite appear above the wraith-like Virgin triumphant, before she vanishes into the night. Finally the Virgin disappears and Venus with her attendant

satellite remains exalted, Queen of the Night. After the Whistler's blue landscape, on which the bridge is sharply limned, dies into blackness the thousand eyes of the night come out and brazen it up and down the hills.

Now the watching figure far above them is hidden. Is it that she shall not see the night's thousand sins? On fine nights the black of the sky is slashed with crimson and pistache. The view from my window over the tawny tops of trees, where the birds hold concerts morn and eve, is a cross between a Whistler and a Muirhead Bone. The birds' chorus in these happy climes rises even when the trees are bare, except the hollies. The intricate tracery of the great iron bridge is just visible against masses of black clouds advancing up the Gulf of Lyons. A myriad lights illumine the Mysteries of Marseilles from every shade of inky blackness.

The night has a thousand eyes.

A song of our spring time. I sang it to one who laughed and said, "So I mustn't stay with you too late!" Together we probed the Mysteries of Marseilles and of the Orient in our radiant youth. Now he has gone—beyond the sun? No, thank God! *nous verrons*.

October 12th. Rain once more, Southampton in miniature and a deadlock at Cook's. "No means of getting farther East," they say. And the sun is shining at Monte Carlo, and the flowers luscious, and the Embassy has written to the Consul to ensure a royal welcome. Boundless

possibilities in a *vie de l'Opérette*. At least a week-end at Cannes.

The terra-cotta Riviera is *à la mode* in all things. The train rushes through natural rock gardens, all along the route, where

> The fig runs up from the beach,
> And riots over the land.

We pass through gardens with golden balls of oranges of the Hesperides. The blue smoke rising from castellated châteaux coils against the rich green pines, the grey greens of olives, the sombre greens of the cypress needles surrounding belled towers of churches warn us that *tempus fugit*. As the night advances livid flames dart from the pyres lining the route the British traverse to die.

We visit the Isles of the Lesser Mysteries. One has the fortress of the Man with the Iron Mask. The other the mysterious Monastery of primeval times, hidden in a grove of giant aloes flowering once a century, from which all women are hermetically barred, also guarded by a fortress.

We return over a silvery sea, our prow cutting the water into a silver lace ruff. Here and there are other grey, wraith-like vessels with silver and gold sails. So might Ulysses have set sail, save for the silver butterfly aeroplane hovering above Ulysses never knew.

Landing, the white and silver gulls forgather in fluffy groups along the shore. The sunset is a wonderful study in

lemon and indigo only. The lemon sunset behind the indigo mountains slashes the glassy blue sea, so often seen in these regions, with flots of yellow. The giant palms in the foreground are all in deepest indigo. The only variant shade is the ruby point glowing in the Lighthouse on the Mole where the Peacemaker's yacht was so often moored. His marble statue in yachting attire dominates the town.

Rose tints first dye the indigo flood, shimmering like spun glass, then, as they fade, the lemon tints slash the waters, merging near the shore into an ocean of molten gold. Wraith-like vessels, with venetian-red sails glide upon it. A regiment of giant indigo palms sentinels the shore. Each frond in their fan-like summits is sharply silhouetted in indigo against the lemon sky. A more lovely combination of lemon and indigo cannot be imagined.

But there is no real mystery on the Riviera. As we ascend its heights there is only the curious, musky smell of many flowers, the murmuring over a breviary of a black-garbed priest.

Society at Monte Carlo is led by three old women of seventy who claw yellow coins by day to conceal yellow skins at night. It is full of wreckage, of elderly couples diseased and dying from want of something to do. Here is a man who has married an old woman for her money in order to produce his life's work, an opera which ran in Paris for two weeks. The girls drink cocktails all day long. Three generations are present. Grandmothers are

raddled with paint. Death leads the way gibbering with his ugly skull.

No. Kashi the Mysterious calls. The heart of all life of the planet. Home. As old Jacolliot said of her long ago, "No one would believe the mysteries we have seen. STILL WE HAVE SEEN THEM."

Oh, Kashi! Mother of the New Race! Mother of us all! I come! I arise from dreams of Thee. I fly round the town and unearth a berth by Messageries Cook has failed to sniff out. A French officer is taking his ticket for Madagascar. I shall have agreeable company, the first bit of cheer since the neuralgic horrors of Southampton Dock. I buy a bunch of violets beneath the dappled avenue where the flower-baskets are dreams of colour and perfume from all the Côte d'Azur.

If these notes appear scrappy, they were made on many scraps of paper, inspired by a *muse insatiable*, and tucked into a Cook's ticket-case.

II

OF MALTA

The dropping of the anchor outside new islands—islands and islands and islands no two ever alike : ever changing languages and ever changing peoples : all in the little—small as a jewel that it seems as though one were able to take it up in the hollows of one's two hands, feel the warmth of it, turning it, catching the glow upon it as upon a jewel. That for me is life. . . . Heaven only knows how I shall ever again live or sleep in the close room of a London flat.—THE VENTURE BOOK.

DECEMBER 4TH. Embarked with Sir Edwin Lutyens, who has come from Spain and who has kindly accepted commission to design our Museum of travel and last rest at Kashi. We are still in dock amidst the Muirhead Bone lines and cables. I find myself at table with three fellow pilgrims bound for Adyar. It is the fiftieth year of the Theosophical Society. In 1875 was the meeting of H.P.B. and H.S.O., in the nick of time, as ever, for the last quarter of the century's revival, at The Eddy Farm House, arranged by the Brotherhood. There the materializations included giants with seven-foot lances measured by the careful colonel. H.P.B. had been told to try the spiritualists and see if they would join her. She failed. Hence her bitterness towards them. Three thousand theosophists, four hundred whites, men of thirty-eight countries, and twenty-five General Secretaries are to be present.

Just before we cast off towards the City of Shiv I send

a farewell wire to a Shivite fog-bound in drear old Town. She has painted a new conception of Him. Young, lithe and svelte, haloed by His own golden glory, expelling the Dark Forces as jagged serpents from His navel. He sits on a blue island by an ice-bound lake. Clouds of incense rise around Him from a ring of bloody braziers. In them are the bleeding hearts of devotees. Behind Him rise eternal snows and leafless branches. Like a Russian icon, the picture has become magnetic and breathes Peace, the English of Shiv, and the essence of His expression.

We land at Malta, that island of flaming sunsets and Angelus bells. Malta is one of the most densely populated islands. She is peopled by a race too degenerate for self-control. Every square yard is overrun by the small, pale, black-eyed people, a mixture of many races, master of none. Only is Malta redeemed in sunshine by her prismatic, bizarre colouring, Malta with her glorious past, her depraved present, her squalor, her cathedrals, her teeming population, her barrenness, her rank, coarse, gangrenous growth, so that even the food she produces is nauseating to a sensitive frame.

The hotel proprietor came bustling officiously out of his office. A typical Maltese, he was small and sallow, dark-eyed and grey-haired, with the face and figure of an ape, the voice of an archbishop. He prided himself on the *haut ton* of his hotel, the best on the island. He addressed some subalterns in soft suave accents. "I

cannot have this row going on here. It's *so common!*" Then catching sight of our party, he jumped nimbly to my side and bowed obsequiously.

"So sorry, milady, not to have a better room for you. But another distinguished lady slept in your apartment. I do like to have nice people here!"

"Really," I replied coldly. "What was her name?"

"Lady Burton!"

That night, as I lay sleepless on Isabel Burton's pillow, from the Grand Harbour, beneath my balcony, came voices as the sound of many waters. It was a troopship going to the East. The P. and O. ships anchor in Sliema Harbour, beneath the orange trees, on their way eastward. How often in my girlish days have I watched them depart from the garden of Sa Maison! How little I then understood that strange, subtle tug at my heart-strings, that yearning not to be left behind! Sa Maison is set in a ledge above the Harbour. The lovely lights and shadows of this semi-tropical garden, tucked into a shelf on the wondrous fortifications of the Warrior Hermits, brought a sense of lulling and temporary peace. For it was hallowed with memories. My mother had come to Malta as a bride. An elder baby brother had died there. I saw my parents moving in the old garden when the mossy lichened tablets were new and crude. The light filters through snowy unfurlings of the arums around the British lions couchant in stone. White butterflies flicker above the tender translucency of the leaves.

Violets of enormous size and crude mauves provide the perfumes. Scarlet poinsettias flaunt of greater Britain beyond the seas. I saw my father in mutton-chop whiskers, my mother in early Victorian flounces, first as a bride, *riante*, *provocante*, *insouciante*, running about the flowers with bursts of happy laughter. And then I saw the saddened disappointed mother of an hour, her halting steps supported by the young husband, the friend of Hedley Vicars, and of Gordon of Khartoum, who gravely quoted Scripture texts in consolation. I watched the P. and O.'s glide away to the East, and had wished to follow them to that dim, mysterious bourne from which no traveller returns unchanged. India from earliest years had always called to me as to those Greeks who obeyed the call like dolphins. Well, the day came when I went. The East welcomed me kindly, most kindly, even as one of its own in an exile's body. They called me a brahmini returned to them in white flesh. The East opened to me the boundless stores of its knowledge wider than to most, even of its own. Aladdin's lamp, the Arabian nights, paled in significance before its marvels.

We walked up the Strada Reale, past the Grand Opera, on to the ramparts, and into the Baracca Gardens. Its arches were clothed with the bougainvillea, which grows with its intensest purple on the tawny stones of Malta. Its petals like purple paper, mixed with the tubes of scarlet wax of the venusta. In any other medium but flowers the com-

bination would scream. But they weld harmoniously to frame the blue waters of the Grand Harbour guarded by the Lower Baracca. We looked to see Calypso glide from the Greek Temple set in palms, watching for Ulysses' ship to steal between the forts to love. But Calypso lived on the lesser isle of Gozo, they say, and, instead of the Grecian barque, were British leviathans.

The Baracca stirs the pride of British hearts with the grandeur of British might displayed beneath the aquamarine harbours cut deeply into the pale gold of fortressed battlements. There lay leviathans, their guns asleep.

We received the sacrament in the small plain, white-washed chapel, kneeling on the same spot as the last of the warrior hermits. A few hours later their headless bodies had been sent across the harbour to the Grand Master in Fort Ricasoli with the cross gashed on their breasts. The heads remained on poles on the outer walls between Turkish banners bearing the crescent.

The ship could not start for some hours. We resolved to spend them in the weird caverns of Hal Saflieni. It is an underground palace meet for the reception of Ulysses by the divine witch Calypso. Here priestesses of the fourth race took precedence of men before the sombre Aryan came. Here they worshipped the great Earth Mother, Astarte.

Once more we prayed, this time at dim underground altars that were old when the Aryan race was young. We dipped our hands in the powdery debris round the shrine

formed of skulls that were long, not round. The bones of men who built the Pyramids and loved and laughed light-heartedly at the height of Egyptian glory, a million years ago. Those men who painted the Eye of Osiris, Who presided over the Forty-two Gods of the Judgment Hall, on the boats of the dead at Cairo and have left it on the boats of the living at Gozo, whose oars are reflected by the dark blue rippling waters as cobras' coils.

The soul left the body to seek for happiness in the Realm of the West, ruled by Osiris. The journey was made in a boat along a dark stream. This river of the dead was beset by demons, but Anubis and Thoth had the soul in charge and brought it before the jury of Forty-two Gods, of which the omnipotent Osiris was President. Then its actions were weighed in the balance. If well, it rose on golden wings to purgatory, and, after, to the shade of sycamore trees cooled by breezes, inhaling perfumes, and eating at the table of Osiris.

Those men who loved and were led by women and worshipped a woman Goddess before the Aryans taught that duty should weave the wedding veil.

Noon. Heavy seas and dull skies. The only brightness the fan of sunrays spraying the horizon from behind a cloud. There a long, crinkly silver, raised line is in sharp relief against the boiling, seething, molten lead. This beautiful illusion lights up the Seven gloomy Sisters of the Lipari Isles. A rainbow trails *ombré* ribbon on to the line and

many little rainbows are made by the spray of the white crests.

Oh, gorgeous vision! Oh guerdon of days to come! There is then a fairer world than our dull Outward Bound!

It is that which has lured us to the toll of body and soul, so that we die in its pursuit. The romance we have never reached. The sauce in the earthenware. The moonlight patch at the end of the passage on the sea. The Never-Never land.

4 p.m. The silver line has now turned to sea-green. From it an ethereal light springs up into the lovely Lipari curve veiling the biggest Sister's twin breasts. We pass the witches' cauldron of Stromboli, from which smoke and angry flames dart. But now our sea of lead has become an ocean of gold. There is a regular sea menagerie with us. A giant swordfish and gay dolphins alongside, martins in the rigging, and of course gulls everywhere. Is there any whiteness so warm and soft as that of the gull's wings and breasts with the sun on and through them? In my nook in the stern, far from the odious crowd below, I see them following us, and one by one they alight on the pennon-pole to pick and preen with pointed bills. Then a white fluff floats out on the air, too light to drop. One follows it floating and fading in golden glory. Wheeling, circling, flapping, poising, white, mottled, and grey, like angels from above, below, how wondrous are thy gulls, oh God! How gorgeous the lapis sea-garden where the giant yellow seaweeds grow!

III

OF THE CANAL

I have heard those songs which are inscribed in the ancient sepulchres, and what they tell in praise of life on earth and belittling the region of the dead. Yet wherefore do they this in regard to the land of Eternity, the just and the fair, where fear is not? Wrangling is its abhorrence, nor does any there gird himself against his fellow. That land, free of enemies!—all our kinsmen from the earliest day of time rest within it. The children of millions of millions come thither, every one. For none may tarry in the land of Egypt; none there is that passeth not thither. The span of our earthly deeds is as a dream; but fair is the welcome that awaits him who has reached the hills of the West.—Neferhotep, a minstrel of Tutankhamen's time.

We reached Suez before the sun rose to-day; I got up very early; the morning sparkled—the sea shimmering the palest green and blue: and Suez lay, just a low line of ochre and lilac buildings, along the yellowish shore. All the colour was cool, clear and light: I walked about the wet washed decks by myself, so happily.

A thick, middle-aged man came and leant on the rail at my side.

"Come and dance on deck."

"Did you see the lilac jelly-fish," I said, "and the sea snakes diving amongst them?"

"No," he answered, laughing, and staring. "You're a queer girl."

Dreamily I thought again of the morning's amazing sight. As I was looking over the ship's side into the sun-filled purity of clear blue water I saw it starred with thousands, with countless multitudes of jelly-fish, floating there in the fields of the sea, all misty lilac, half transparent and half opaque; swayed this way and that in the limpid waves, they moved gently, seeming tranced by the slow motion. Tremulous with filaments of palest mauve spreading round them, and wavering in the warm sea, they stretched as far as I could see right down to the translucent blue.

And then, as I looked, I suddenly saw, plunging deeply among the soft, nebulous forms, two glistening sea-snakes. Shining emerald they were: swift and twisting, they seemed to reel downwards into the depths. I felt that I was looking into a world of life too remote, too strange, too fantastic, and I looked no longer, half afraid that some still greater marvel would appear.—Flowers and Elephants.

December 9th. Peace at last! We have left Europe and blizzards and taxis behind and are slipping down the Canal. The Canal has a society of its own, *en évidence* at the *thé dansant* at Port Saïd. The Canal belle arrives with

her mother, chattering volubly in French. She is met by her fiancé, a typical Frenchman, and after a turn with him, is jazzed by a tall youth whose straight lank denotes a Gyppy dash.

How Port Saïd recalls ghosts of yore! Of Mrs. Royle, the most beautiful woman of Europe, immortal on the foundation-stone of the church her husband built. Of the warm-hearted, noble Irishman, Ross Scott. A griffin I.C.S., he made their maiden voyage East with H.P.B., chivalrously determined she should have fair play. A brilliant career ended, this just Chief Justice of the United Provinces passed on just as his retirement was won. Of the soldier, member of a brilliant military house. He made the East a playground of Hell.

We are followed by a new crowd. The gulls are soft grey like huge doves. It is a fine sight to see their dance on the lapis water near a vermilion buoy. The reflections turn the white wheeling breasts to green. They utter sharp cries in scrambling for tit-bits. As though to atone for the storms, the Canal has never been more lovely. The water turns the whole gamut of blues and greens from indigo to opal, the sands of Araby and Egypt from vandyke to primrose. The Garden of Allah is there complete. Emerald oases, palms, tents, camels, arabs and all. The *couchette du soleil* is the Real Thing. No longer the Pretty Fanny's cream and rose of the Mediterranean, but the barbaric scarlet of the East.

In the south, to which we were headed, a high range of Africa's stark limestone crags stood over a burnished sea. The sun looked straight at them. And just above them, parted from their yellow metallic sheen by a narrow band of sky, was the full globe of the declining moon; and the moon herself was no more distant and no more spectral than earth's bright rocks beneath her. . . . Those luminous bergs shone like copper. Their markings were as clear and fine as the far landscape of a newly-risen harvest moon. Suez was not far away, and its lilac shadows were as unearthly as the desert. But there was substance alongside our ship. Some villas were immediately below, arboured in tamarisk and cassia. A few trees in that green mass were in crimson flower. I could smell the burning ashore of aromatic wood. A child in a cerise gown stood under a tree, but she was so still that, like the polished water, like the hills of brass, and the city built of tinted shades, she might have been the deceit of an enchantment.

The ship's crowd develops. There is a Catholic party of thirty bound for Kenya. They comprise:

1 Bishop,
1 Reverend Mother,
6 young priests, just ordained.
6 nuns.
2 lady doctors.
13 White Fathers.
1 curé going to Mauritius.

Doctor MacNeil is a new convert. She went to Rome and had the unusual privilege of receiving Communion in the Holy Father's private chapel administered with his own hands, who welcomed her into the church. All Catholic Rome said, "This means a special mission for you." She then went to Lourdes to seek it. There she heard that the Reverend Mother, who had just left, sought a physician for Kenya! The White Fathers have spread over all Africa except the Sahara. At eve they tell us tales of lion combats in Rhodesia, one having killed three. Of the luscious fruits and food, apricots, grapes, and strawberries of Tanganyka. "Tout est parfait, excepté l'appétit. Il me faut la quinine chaque jour." Dear devoted Daniels! Uncouth, unread, they have the supreme gift of bhakti! The curé, aged about forty-five, travels to Mauritius because no one else wants the job. However, he reassures me that the old families of his cure are the cream of aristocracy. He is most *empressé* that I, when at Port Saïd, should make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. He gives me the name of the Fraternity there who would attend to my spiritual needs. He recurs over and over again to this. I have not the heart to tell him that the home of the sages who first saw the Star of the Birth at Jerusalem is my goal.

There is a Wembley band *en route* for Calcutta. Blatant, braying, it is rapturously received. A woman with hooped orange skirts and an enormous Spanish comb sings a duet *re* "Marcheta and Mosquitoes," with a man in topee and

green "buggist's" veil. British officers in raucous chorus call for "whisky suhdas" and are "pahnicking about wahless!" How are the mighty fallen! I cannot help recalling the dreamy subtle waltzes of our youth, such as Narenta. But an exhausted empire means the simplest and baldest themes to-day, drumming in music, drink and harlots in drama.

This is more than ever true since the war. I submit that the wonderful revival of poetry for the three years of the war, now shut up like a clam, was like the Italian Renaissance of painting, also turned off like a tap after three centuries. It was due to the refining of the spirit by war conditions. The ideal of honour, country, and home inspired it. This is now obscured by the sordid struggles of taxes, etc. The revival of spiritualism counteracts this. Hence the medium serves the cause of the White Brotherhood in Their ceaseless struggle versus the Brothers of the Shadow.

The winches are like the gargoyles of Notre Dame. We seem to have been at sea for an age. The exposed forecastle with its rusty gear, where I feel most at home, has become friendly and comforting. . . . The great red links of the cable, the ochrous stains on the plates, the squat black winches like crouched and faithful familiars, the rush and gurgle of fountains in the hawse-pipes when the ship's head dips, the glow of the deck and the rails like the grateful warmth of a living body, and the ancient smell, as if you could sniff the antiquity of the sea and the sweat of a death-

less ship on a voyage beyond the counting of mere days, give me a deeper conviction of immortality than all the eager arguments from welcome surmises. I am in eternity. There is no time. There is no death. The seas of Sappho have become chunks of sapphire and emerald. Both green and blue are equally true to those glorious gems at their best. In this fairies' part of the world the jelly-fish are little topaz umbrellas set in a chunk of emerald, carved in front and behind with surface tracery, churned into aqua-marine Marcelle waves by our progress. The banks are lined with purple rushes of the same meshes in which Pharaoh's daughter found Moses. The casuarina trees glide by like a tapestry panorama. Our aftermath washes down the yellow sand, topazes and all, like a miniature Niagara. Nothing seems real.

The Canal stations seem to be painted in exaggerated colours. The mirages of great lakes and winged boats crumble into quicksands in a quivering line. There is something mystic in the remoteness of that mirage-line. It is a wall guarding the last stronghold of romance, a defiant challenge to the dwindling army of earth's adventurers. Beyond are stewing jungle and rivers green with fever; a wilderness peopled with creatures that no amount of profound research and "pi jaw" can make me believe were my brothers; these and God only knows what other stark realities; and yet I thrill at the suggestion of incredible possibilities.

The melancholy beauty of this voyage!

Dawn, and the sea dreaming remote dreams, dreams too chaste for men. Midday: and the world ringed by a clear horizon separating two hemispheres of blue. Sunset: and gloom of bronze, rose tissue in the west, saffron: and purple where the night was smouldering. Dusk: and the wind frail as a cobweb: stars in the heather darkness.

Pale immaculate gloom washes the promenade, and silence. The hush seems measured and intensified by the great throbs that come up from the belly of the ship where, amid grease and oil and metal entrails, sullen furnaces are digesting a feast of fire. Woven through this cottony stillness are the hiss and crush of foam spinning past the hull. Beyond the rail, in what seems another world, sky and sea are merged in a pulsing immensity of darkness made mysterious by millions of eyes.

A heavy calm flattened the water to glassy opaqueness: directly overhead a vanishing vomit of smoke gave an unreal quality to the stars, a transient beauty, frail as the memory of dying light.

There was immense depth to the scene, an imposing tyranny that seemed to declare the permanence of sea and the evanescence of men. All the beauty and loneliness of living, all the splendour and agony of dying were invested in the tremendous sweeps of distance . . . a night designed to make dreams a certainty and life without substance.

And I imagined that, borne across the calm from a coast

low-lying and unseen, was a faint distillation of tropical fragrance, the savour of enchantment. It was like a re-discovered perfume of the past. I saw myself as a girl, the globe in my hands as a magic crystal. Suddenly all of life seemed contained in it with one sublime moment at its pole, a moment of supreme fulfilment worth all the dreary sterility of dead years. Yet were they sterile? Whose fruits had made me, in one summer season, known to the *intelligentsia* of three continents?

That moment had come, lifting the very fact of existence into a region exalted and unearthly. I felt myself the possessor of great secrets, the true antidotes for despair and anguish. Work and love. I was for an instant Mistress of Life and Death. Brief this exultation, and when it had gone I knew I had felt the touch of true Romance.

The Arabian desert lives up to its music, which stung my ears like particles of glass, it flowed into my soul like honey and wrapped me in a dream of bubbling impetuosity that vibrated every muscle in my body, electrified every nerve I possessed.

The dark jungle river choked with hyacinths; the diamonds in the whirlpool and the ruby in the rice-pot; the blow-pipes, sharks, sandstorms and opium; the damsel in Arabia who danced to gurgling water-pipes.

IV

OF ADEN

Let us remember that it is all very well for wise pilots in other and darker seas to assume they may teach young voyagers the right ways in the deceptive and fog-bound coasts of philosophy. Philosophy? That is easy. We may make our charts then according to inspiration or desire.— "THE RED SEA AND GULF OF ADEN PILOT."

I was thinking of the desert stretching into Africa, miles of colourless sand and sand-coloured lions moving, fields of blue vetch by the Nile; and the black tombs of the Bulls of Apis, dark and stifling under their loads of sand—thick heat in there, and thick darkness, and the empty, sombre passages going between the great black granite tombs sunk deep in underground halls. And fields of beans, and fields of lupins, and loose-growing sugar-cane, and dense corn: and behind, the rosy wall of the Libyan Mountains in the jocund morning light, honeycombed with tombs—full of mummies in hard painted cases, and painted halls and creamy passages, and roofs coloured with the young blue of Egypt—the most adorable colour in the world.

In the cool air lovely bird-like boats, painted green, with pointed white sails, came sailing near and about us. The huddled figures in them seemed to have been there all night, so immobile were they; while one steered the others sat, with blue cloths shrouding them, silently looking across the water. Some of the boats brought slippery fish, some dates crushed into blocks, some fruit piled high. When the sun rose, the houses on shore shone white with deep shadows and more boats came rowing out towards us; boats full of boys, brown and black, clothed in a few wisps, who sang and grinned with white teeth and rowed slowly round the ship, their faces upturned while they shouted guttural Arabic. In one sat a blue-black Nubian youth with a bit of pink stuff knotted round his head; his gleaming body looked polished in its blackness against the pale waters as he sprawled there idly with a parrot perched on his shoulder.—FLOWERS AND ELEPHANTS.

The Queen of the South came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon.—JESUS.

December 13th. Aden. The Adyar party have gone to visit the Wells of Solomon and his jade, the Queen of Sheba. She still haunts the Turkish fort when the moon is full. I remain to discuss plans with Sir Edwin Lutyens. The Sheba party expect great things of Adyar, no less than

MOSQUE OF ADEN.

the reincarnation of the Buddha. Lady Emily Lutyens, who is the chief Herald of the Star, has gone on ahead with Mrs. Besant to prepare for the mighty event.

Aden is always rich in colour. Velazquez or Goya might have painted the boat manned by black and copper Arabs in sombre turbans of dull reds and greens, lying beneath in the green water and enriched with clouds of diver-birds and brown hawks in carrion tints, called in Arabic "angry proprietors," because they squabble over their prey. El Greco might have painted the sharp black and whites of the rocky Isle of Quarantine. In Aden, because of the rock refractions, the rust is always lovely. All the old barges and buoys are painted in different gorgeous tints of orange lying in jade. A gigantic striated turnip fixes our prow.

Carved dhows date from Elizabethan days. Consulates fly flags of the New World. Warmth and colour and leisure at last. *Dolce far niente* in a boat beneath us, where a man unfurls his loin-cloth to act as a sail. No one wishes to row. Far to the south is a forest of peaks, misty in the heat, and a light that never was on sea or land. Anything might happen out there. For it is not the sea. It is a shimmering radiance as galvanic as the warm bath of an intense passion, and the areas of coral rock betray in blinding incandescence what secret energy is at work. On either side of the channel, barely immersed, were whelks of coral and crusty scars, reefs waiting to cicatrize some ship and

send her to the bottom, there to rot amid the marine ulcers and other wounds left by undersea eruptions. Nearer, the rocks are of brown velvet with shadows showing dim, mysterious caves. And still the birds circle, circle, wheeling and crying to right and left in battalions of white, brown and grey.

> The screaming gulls that wheel and soar
> Above the long, enchanted shore
> Can never tell if they have seen,
> Beneath the sea's translucent green . . .

Oh, Brother Birds! What do you want? You want what we all want, to live our day to its uttermost and die. I wanted to go somewhere where no white man had ever been before. I wanted to see a wild country, to hear the barbaric rhythm of paddles beat against the gunwales of a dugout, to hear the howling of the orang-outangs in the jungle and the throbbing of a medicine drum. I wanted to explore, and set my foot upon land that no white man had ever conceived of. It would be the darkest jungle.

The highest peak, the signal station of 1,800 feet, is known as Shum Shum!

THE MYSTERY OF THE MAGICAL BUNGALOW

Ever-extending lines of palm-fringed shore,
  Sheltered lagoons of calm and tranquil face
Unmoved by ocean's deep and sullen roar,
  Dreaming beneath the sun's resplendent rays;
Gay boats that glide by mazy water ways,
  An old town where all day long
Worshippers wend their way to shrines in streams;
  Inspiring damsels versed in art and song,
And many friendly faces, sweet and kind;
These are the visions clinging to my mind.

BOMBAY MEMORIES.

There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

HAMLET.

BOMBAY, Port of Destiny of the Eastern World. A sea of peacock green, streaked with mauve in places, in others blue as turquoise, and, in the distance, a string of jade islands. Round one the world-end steamers wait.

Ah, Loti! Whose fascinating interiors have so often enthralled me in Paris, displayed in the shop *vis-à-vis* to the Comédie Française. Prince of sailors. Prince of artists! A mystic without a faith, a pilgrim despairing of life, yet dreading death, what a sombre road you must have walked! And yet how splendid! To feel the winds of exotic seas in your hair; to hear the soft music of palms; to see the blinding white of pagan temples burning in the sunlight! These sensations you sought,

but they gave you no peace. The winds of adventure became poignant breaths from the lips of dying love, the music of palms a funereal strain; the white temples were the bleached remains of religions in whose creeds and rituals you found no solace.

Bombay. Christmas Day. First step to rest! Oh, its peace! Its calming, soothing magnetism. Its absence of turmoil and hurry. Above all *its mysteries concealed!* Am met by old Judge Khandalavala, brought down by his son, who nearly thirty years ago gave the first letter of introduction to a friend in Kashi to the girl bride. Am not surprised when he hands me a typed communication from his deceased daughter that my husband says, "Unless you leave India immediately you will be killed by a motor!"

Opposition Forces at work already! But what matters that? In the lapping of the water round the scarlet barge which later will float out on a tide of molten silver to meet the incoming rush of gold, in the rustling of the palms towards Parel and the magic hostel, in the soft, subdued voices of the Goanese servants, in their silent squatting in the shade of the pink oleanders in the noontide heat, in the gorgeous tints of the sunset, which appears fresh painted to greet the pilgrims, of whom more anon, in the mystery of Elephanta behind us, even in the sinister cries of the vultures, said to be the incarnate souls of the damned, that compelling Force which always, everywhere, draws us

Home, has now effected its impact. Overpowering, overwhelming, soothing, comforting, lulling, we are rocked on the Mighty Mother's bosom.

India Takes Back Her Own

I welcome the residuum of seventy-seven pilgrims just arrived *via* Venice for Adyar. The party includes a Viking from the north and a tiny girl from " down under," dressed in sapphire blue to match her eyes. She is said to hold meditation classes of sixty spell-bound. The pretty young lady relates how a furious blizzard, rending Europe, destroying houses, trains, and transporting a dray many yards, split in time to spare Ommen, Star of the East centre in Holland, destroying villages on either side. Also that a communication came that night from Lord Mattreya that, to prevent a new European war, he would incarnate sooner. All are therefore tremendously agog that the incarnation may take place at Adyar.

The Harbour of Fate for so many of the Anglo-Saxon race excels herself at night. As though to welcome the strangers' festival, the sunset is the most glorious ever seen. Sky and sea first all flame, then all deepest rose. Absolutely unparalleled. All the domes and spires of mosque and temple are in black velvet relief against the orange sky towards which one gigantic black bird is flying. Only the Taj Mahal Hotel is brilliantly lit, suggesting the last outpost

of Venus in the pilgrims' land. All the barges and ships have turned deep black, too, on the molten silver tide, interlined with gold, rushing outwards. Four lighthouses are flashing lights, one in *pistache*, towards Malabar Hill, outlined in fire. A barge rushes past ringed with life-belts like a cobra. It glides through the water, its ruby and topaz eyes aflame. Venus is so brilliant one cannot look at her. The day's din has died down. The Westerns are dancing in their clubs, the Easterns are praying on their rugs. Only the ubiquitous cricket whirs, calling out with its insistent cry:

India Takes Back Her Own!

Boxing Day. In the early, pearly morning a sailing boat rushed past my window chock-full of forms in delicately coloured saris for a holiday sail. White gulls whirl past, their snowy pinions glinting in the sunlight. A band is playing harmonies too intricate for the Occidental ear. Welcome is writ large all over Bombay.

India Takes Back Her Own!

Then this arrives:

Malabar Hill.

Dear Madame,

I had the pleasure some time back of reading your perfectly charming book—"Pages from the Life of a Pagan"—and since you are in Bombay, we would

consider it a privilege if you attended our meeting of the Three Arts Circle to-morrow evening at 5 o'clock. We hold our meetings at Aiwane-I-Raffat, Ridge Road, Malabar Hill, the residence of the Begum of Jangira. Her Highness is the sister-in-law of Mr. Fyzee-Raham, who has been commissioned to paint the Indian frescoes at Delhi, and her house is perfectly exquisite—built of red sandstone in the old Moghul style, with a cypress terrace garden and waterfalls running into the house.

It is so rare that one gets anyone of real artistic merit passing through Bombay, so we do hope you'll come. May I hope that you will ring me up at 40569 if you are free to attend, and I could do myself the pleasure of calling for you.

Truly yours,

DARIUS TALAYARKHAN.

N.B.—Please excuse this very unconventional letter.

I 'phoned acceptance of this letter and was answered in Public School accents, "How awfully jolly of you! Righto!" A motor-car duly came, and I was surprised to see from my verandah that it apparently contained only a lady in a crimson dress! The smart chauffeur handed me in, however, to an extraordinarily handsome youth with pure Persian features crowned with dark curly hair, and dressed in a Tyrian robe! The Begum's house was indeed a miniature Shah Jehan palace, with rose bath, pierced marble

seats, and water-chute at the entrance, on a terrace commanding one of the finest views in the world of a palmy city on a bay. The view from the roof displays Bombay as almost an island with a small neck from Warli, the scene of the magical bungalow. At our feet the city lay between the palms and the sea, the coco-palms which grow on an area of twenty miles inland but are nourished by the sea, and all manner of flowering trees, one waxy white blossom scenting a whole house. There are dense groves of palms down to the water's edge. It may be that *there* the magical bungalow is hidden. The light, at the sunset, turned from lemon to ruddy over this loveliest of cities set on a bay. The bay of Naples is the only bay to compare with this. On the terrace are two fountains lined with blue, one with a permanent bubble, another supports an orange. Pigeons in iridescent purples disport in the fountains. These roam wild at their own sweet will, "fair, free, and without reproach," fed by charitable bunnias who scatter seeds of kindness for them. Emerald parrots utter blood-red cries intermittently. Big black butterflies, the size and shape of humming-birds, flit heavily over the ground. There were saris in palest sea-greens, black and silver, and powder-blue combined with purple and bordered with old gold. The windows are not made of glass but of fretted red sandstone, showing the waving fig branches and sprays of jasmine outside. Altogether a fairy scene.

The advanced Islamic lady conducting the proceedings

announced that queens had deigned to honour the Three Arts! These were the Queens of Kuch Behar and of Gwalior. The latter, a purdah nashin, watched the proceedings from behind one of the lovely carved screen windows. Two slave girls plied fans behind her couch. She was a tiny creature, though recently widowed wearing gorgeous jewels, and Regent of the State and Guardian of the infant Scindia, her son. Her common sense was evinced in her remark *re* Mr. Darius: "He funny boy, why dress like that?" I gathered from an Englishman present that this clever hybrid of East and West aspired to be a Bombay *arbiter elegantiarii*, and would probably succeed. He read us an article, already accepted by the *Century*, of his own, in addition to one of the hostess *re* "The Lotus." Admirable as all this was and miles above the futilities of the Yacht Club, to my mind it lacked the soul of India. For the Lotus is the symbol of the human heart, and Om Mani Padme hum, plastered all over mystic Thibet, refers to the meditation of the Yogi that the Master is sitting in his own heart. All gorgeous India is but the casket containing our Lords.

Mrs. Naidu, President of the Indian Congress, was present. She said that Annie Besant, former President, had completely lost all political influence. Any spiritual influence she now possessed was due to her championship of the new Avatar.

Mrs. Naidu is handsome, dark, sombre, and unhappy.

She is fighting against Karma, fighting against fate. She does not see that the subjection of her country to a foreign country was necessary, if India was to become the Spiritual Mother of the Globe. That the re-Indianization of the land under the Montagu reforms is proceeding at a rate undreamed of by either side. That it is hard for her to kick against the pricks. If you are wiser, pity her. May she rest in peace!

Bombay was a confused delirium of Arabian nights of pleasure, of toiling out in the hot sun in quest of truth, of driving by ethereal moonlight to dinners presided over by women like midnight suns, of squalid bazaars and mansions like the Taj Mahal, of Turkish baths of perspiration, and cooling fountains of sherbet and orangeade.

Now the holy places of India are of two sorts. Some, such as Kashi, are sacred because of mysteries concealed, e.g. temples made with hands of brick and stone. All sensitive people can sense them but cannot see them. Others, such as Amarnath, which we shall visit later, are sacred only because of the Influence brought by the prayers of the devotees. I fly to the Theosophical Headquarters to read once more the account of the magical bungalow hidden in or near Bombay. This is what I read:

> "A bet of R.100 was made that Moulji Thackersey could not find the magnificent bungalow with rose garden in a wood, which he and Mme Blavatsky had

THE CROW'S NEST.

From which the Magical Bungalow was visited.

visited together the previous day. She had guided the coachman by astral perceptions and had met her Master in the house." This time Colonel Olcott accompanied them both. "Having found the wood of coniferæ, possibly casuarina trees, for an hour we drove now to this side, now to that of the wood, intersected by roads. At last a train rattled by and showed poor Moulji that he had guided us in the very opposite direction to the one desired. Mme Blavatsky told us that Moulji would have found the mystical bungalow if a glamour had not been brought to bear on his sight, and that it, like all other spots inhabited by adepts, was protected by a circle of illusion. This particular bungalow was kept by a reliable agent and used as an occasional rest-house and meeting-place for Gurus and chelas when travelling. All the buried ancient libraries, vast hoards of treasure, hidden until its karma requires human use, are protected by illusory pictures of solid rocks, unbroken ground, yawning chasms, etc." This story coincides with folklore tradition.

Judge Khandalavala told me he had visited the Crow's Nest a few days after the episode of the magical bungalow and had heard the inmates chaffing Moulji on his inability to find it, so this is direct evidence from a living man of its existence.

Doctor Trilokekar, the oldest member of the Bombay

Lodge, is brought to me. He is a practising physician whose brother is president of a Bombay college. He also is fascinated by the mystery of the concealed house. "I found an old map of Bombay of 1872. I showed it to Bishop Leadbeater and Jinaradasa that they might find the house by astral perceptions. They were too rushed at the time."

K. T. "Colonel Olcott says it was at Parel?"

V. S. T. "I am convinced it exists at Warli. It was near there that adepts met and saluted H.P.B. when driving. The village of Warli is in a wood formed of pine or casuarina trees with needles. I hope to found a colony near it."

K. T. "You will never be allowed to do that."

V. S. T. "Not even of aspirants, as at Adyar? We want five thousand converts for the new Avatar."

K. T. "Not even so. The maya is created for the express purpose of keeping people off."

V. S. T. "I accompanied Colonel Olcott to Elephanta. He put his hand on the exact spot in the caves where Mme Blavatsky disappeared."

Their joint visit to Elephanta is described in Old Diary Leaves, but not her disappearance there, described in the caves of Karli. The Health Officer of Bombay told me that an enormous sum had been expended by the Government on an asphalt road and esplanade, one and a quarter miles long, in the hope of making Warli a smart suburb. The whole thing had failed. Only one Parsee had cared to pay

the price asked for the land and erect a villa, which was unoccupied. The speculators in land there had forced up fantastic prices. No one would pay. They were ruined by the bursting of the boom. The Byculla Club, once worth five lacs, was now only worth one lac.

Exactly. The guardians of the magical villa know how to preserve its privacy.

Doctor Trilokekar then told me how he had been given a profile portrait of Master Morya, known to some of us. He hesitated to take it home because he feared the opposition of his parents. But the moment he entered the house his father said: "You have the Master's portrait. I saw him last night!"

The doctor told me of a precipitated letter from Master Maurya, long possessed by a friend of his, Professor Unwala. He obtained it in 1882, from Prince Harisinghji. The Founders of the Theosophical Society had visited his cousin the Thakore of Wadhwan, in Kathiawar, in 1882, and then the letter arrived. He made my mouth water by describing its beauty. He told me the original was at Adyar, but promised me a copy. Next morning I drove down into the heart of Girgaum, and dripping from the heat, ran him to earth in his dispensary. I begged him, for the sake of a sorrowing world, to give me this little bit of comfort for them from the great Guru, to be whose chela I had earned the right to have the chance in this life. And I minutely described His appearance to the doctor who had not seen Him.

He faithfully promised "to strike off a bromide" from his negative and to send it to my hotel in twenty-four hours, with a photo of Moulji Thackersey that he had scoured Bombay to obtain. Also, he offered to take me to the Crow's Nest, now rented by a friend of his, from which the magical hostel had been visited, it being *en route* to Warli. That night I wrote a cordial invitation to the doctor to take tea the next day and to drive with me to the Crow's Nest, and also to Warli to search for the bungalow, though we should never have found it. Not only did I receive no reply, but neither of the photos ever turned up. Presumably because I am not one of the five thousand! Thus, the brotherhood of Doctor Trilokekar!

On another occasion I scoured unsuccessfully the Ghats of Kashi in search of a worthy pundit, said to meditate there each evening, and who had a MS. of secret Blavatskian doctrine from which part of "The Masters and the Path" had been taken. The pundit refused to give it, though one of the first precepts of occultism is, that no one is helped unless they pass it on to others. I have, however, been able to obtain a copy of the letter from another source. It is in the red script of Maurya and begins with characteristic irony.

> "To all those whom this may concern—to the honourable and doubting company (some were brilliant atheists).
>
> "Foolish are the hearts who doubt of our existence!

or of the powers our community is in possession of for ages and ages. Would that you would open your hearts to the reception of the blessed truth, and obtain the fruits of the Arhatship, if not in this, then in another and better rebirth.

"Who is for us—answer!"—M.

Later I saw Judge Khandalavala in his own house. He is seventy-six years old and the oldest member of the T.S. in the East. He is a judge and accustomed to weigh evidence. Also he is a most profound student of occultism and has been a member of the Eastern School all his life. He has heard everything, read everything that has been given out on the subject both in East and West. Therefore he may be said to give the last word on the outer aspects of that controversy which has convulsed the outer life of the world. But it was not his karma in this life to be a direct disciple himself. The following dialogue took place:

K. T.—"Is the information correct in 'The Masters and the Path,' that there are Egyptian, Venetian, Hungarian and Cyprian Mahatmas, as well as Hindus? I have no direct knowledge of any other than Hindu Masters and chelas."

J. K.—"Yes, I have heard Mme Blavatsky speak of them. She stayed in my house at Poona. I knew her intimately. She told me her innermost secrets. I have a profound veneration for her. She had such stores of knowledge!"

K. T.—"What do you think of the author of the 'Masters and the Path?'"

J. K.—"He has brought over from his curate days at St. Alban's, Holborn, and even then he was ambitious to be a bishop, certain noxious ideas. But I take the view that these, being of the personality, do not affect his discipleship of the Masters."

K. T.—"That is the Roman Catholic doctrine. But do you think the Masters can use a person with such ideas?"

J. K.—"He has given out most valuable new science in 'Occult Chemistry.'"

K. T.—"What do you think of the new Avatar?"

J. K.—"The boy is a student who has given out helpful teaching and has intuition. I cannot say more."

Judge Khandalavala told me what I had previously heard from others, that there was a second concealed house at Thana. Mme Blavatsky with Damodar and others were met by its agents and conducted there. Never again could the bungalow be found.

In support of this statement *re* the hidden occult centres in India, the following is from Mrs. Besant's "Avataras."

"Of the Kalki, the tenth Avatar, the future one, *but little may be said.* He will come when there is born upon earth the sixth Root Race. A higher race of men when the Kali Yog has passed away, the dawn of a brighter age. There will be a great change in the world, a great manifestation of occult truth. Occultism will show itself to the world, so

IN THE CAVE OF ELEPHANTA.

Where Mme. Blavatsky phenomenally disappeared.

that none can deny. He will give the rule over the Race to the two kings, of the Kalki Purana. The ideal King and Priest are all through history. Such a mighty pair come for every race, the ruler, the Manu, the Brahmana, the teacher.

"The Kalki Avatar will call from the sacred village of Shamballa, *the village known to the occultist but not to the profane*, two kings who have remained behind to help the world. The King in the Purana is called Mauru. In the womb of the fifth Race, the sixth is being chosen. The King and Teacher of the sixth are already at their mighty, beneficent work. They are choosing and testing those who shall form the sixth Race, subjecting souls to many an ordeal to see if there be the strength out of which a new race can spring.

"When their work is done will come the Kalki Avatar, to sweep away the darkness, to send the Kali Yog into the past, to proclaim the birth of the new Satya Yog, with a new and more spiritual race that is to live therein. Then will He call King Mauru and Brahmana Devapi to give into Their hands the race that they are building, the race to inhabit a fairer world, to carry onward the evolution of humanity."

It is interesting to note that in the Secret Doctrine we are told that Master Maurya will lead the new race. So that even in the Purana, dating from before history, the very name of our Master was known to prophetic vision. Also that Devapi is Koot Hoomi.

Mme Blavatsky has written of the Imperishable Sacred

Land as at the Pole. Aviators, flying over it, have given that the lie. But I believe it was the spiritual axis she wrote of, passing through Mount Meru, the mystic sacred hill of the Himalayas, on which Mahadev still sits. And that by the Imperishable Sacred Land, she meant the hidden and mystic city, Shamballa, prepared by the adept kings of the third Race for the advent of the Lords of Venus, eighteen million years ago. Born of their mighty force, Shamballa is still intact in brick and stone, the headquarters of the spiritual life of the planet. That is why in mystic books the mystic village is described as over the heart of the earth.

This coincides with private information of my own that there are "thousands of people who worship these same Masters *outside* of the T.S." These people appear to form a community of their own. Like all concealed places, theirs has the power to inhibit itself from being seen or intruded on by the outer world. At the same time I have been informed that there is no rule to prevent them mixing in the outer life when they have work to do there. I believe it is they who make use of the Magical Bungalow and other concealed places, when travelling or performing their spiritual functions.

They will appear publicly as leaders of the new Root Race which is to inhabit California seven hundred years from now.

That is why California is, even now, honeycombed with occult bodies. There are the Rosicrucians, Universals,

Sat-Sangans, Metaphysicians and Brotherhoods of Light. They are already preparing for the Sixth Root Race to be cradled in California in seven centuries. We workers will all presumably reincarnate there.

Now the reader will at once ask what first-hand knowledge I have of this or other concealed houses? I am only permitted to *say* that I KNOW that places concealed by maya from the profane, where adepts are working, exist in other parts of India, having personally visited them. Also that the occult world is a big thing. It is not only a few Gurus and chelas, but contains many persons who presumably frequently pass through Bombay, and would need a secluded hostel. I once asked a high initiate in Kashi *re* this selfsame house. He replied, "It is for the storage of magnetism." That accounts for Mme Blavatsky forbidding Moulji for his "life not to enter." In one powerful concealed temple of Shiv, the greatest on the planet, the vibrations are so powerful that they would kill. Hence no young aspirant is allowed to enter, even astrally, except in charge of his Guru.

I am able to give the following, from one who knows *re* Kashi. "You take a passage. You think it leads in a certain direction. In reality it brings you back (as with Moulji) to where you started."* This is on the authority of one or two friends who have both access to the occult temples in the flesh. This follows *after*, and as a later stage, to access in the astral body. As Mme. Blavatsky was visited constantly

* *Vide* "The Mystery of the Urn, Time, and Space," page 50.

at the Crow's Nest by adepts, sometimes on horseback, it is probable they made the villa their headquarters while their physical work was being done.

As we leave Bombay, the water laps soothingly. A copper athlete leaps in. The scarlet semal trees between the luscious palms make the red roofs pale.

THE FIRST TO WELCOME ME BACK TO THE MOTHERLAND.

THE MYSTERY OF THE SIBYL

> There is a lovely vision in my mind,
> An August morning on the mighty stream
> Of Jumna, hours passing like a dream.
>
> VANISHED HOURS.

WOKE in the train to see an immense orange globe hanging above the grey world. Thought it must be the sun, as the moon had been a pale small ball. But no, it was the moon, who sank in a minute beneath the grey world. Shortly after, on the opposite side, " it was the blessed sun " who dyed the clouds exactly the same orange above a forest of grey palms.

Landmarks, the same old India. The ryot at the well as patient, the black hump on his dun bail* as big, the sari of his wife as scarlet, the smell of his fire as pungent, the clouds of white pelicans as airy and fairy, the solitary black and white stork with the black bill as sinister, the blue glints of the jay as electric, the flag of the village temple in the sacred marigold garden as pathetic in its faith as ever. At Alitpur a troupe of five monkeys from the jungle have rushed the station and one climbs up the door of the carriage and looks in at the window, the first Hindu to welcome back to the Motherland. As we

* Bullock.

approach Agra, we see the Triumph of the Egg, the Egg of the World, glimmering between the trees. We are passing from the Bird Country to the Dome Land. The domes are more frequent. The antelopes bound through the candelabra of the cactus. Royal blue peacocks in pairs pose against its misty greens. Ever the pungent smell of the Panjab, the aromatic burning, becomes more potent, till, arriving in the compound of Maiden's Hotel, Delhi, it is the sharpest fragrance in the world.

Of Delhi nothing. It has become an Anglo-Indian horror. Once Delhi was expressed in

> Thro' the old city's silence
> Where the Jumna flows,
> Oh! listen to the nightingale
> Sing lyrics to the rose.

Delhi of our dreams, our youth, our illusions! When the women vanishing into the narrow slit-like gate of the Purana Kila were the very incarnation of the mystery of the East. Now the whole jungly village through which we pass to the gem mosque of the Tiger King has been cleared out and tidied into a grass lawn, like a golf course, approached by a new flight of steps behind the gate. There is no mystery now. The city of Shah Jehan was a tiny official station where we prided ourselves in keeping off "box wallahs," who revenged themselves by annotating the Club copy of "The Voice of the Orient" as "The product of a *plebean* [sic] mind!" Now it is: "Lady — (the Viceroy's wife) sends

down lilac to her special friends. I got a large bouquet this morning," etc., all day long.

I scrambled up a ladder on to the roof of the hotel and saw the havoc and horror worked on our old city. Our old bungalow backed on to Nicholson's Ridge, where the jackal used to scurry through the deserted mosque. Opposite was ruined Metcalfe House, from which Theophilus Metcalfe watched, across the Jumna, the massing of the rebels under Bahadur Shah's brief Indian summer reign in the rose-red turret walls. For us, the ruin was covered with the dudh flower and the peacocks' chorus rose at eve. Now, crowning horror! It has been rebuilt and whitewashed into a Secretariat. For us who knew Delhi in the old days she is ghastly with the bones of things that have died.

Only the fort is more beautiful than before, from Lord Curzon's loving care. The hibiscus and poinsettia form groves, the soft velvet sward a carpet, to connect the relics saved from British barbarism of the loveliest set of rooms in all the world. Nay, he has even furnished one set of the jewelled marble rooms into some faint resemblance of the glorious days of yore. As we pass to the vast Jama Musjid, the companion building of royal grandeur, one thinks of his Durbar elephant procession, with golden howdahs and princely profiles against the cerulean sky, which once passed along this road. No one who saw it can ever forget the radiant smiles of Mary Curzon, the bronzed gravity of the potentates, the unending defile of the great beasts, whose

magnificence, one after the other, took one's breath away. All vanished as a dream, the greatest Viceroy, the loveliest vice-reine, and the biggest elephant. For their elephant, lent by the Maharajah of Benares, died, as he told me, the same day as Lady Curzon. Four men were connected with my life in Delhi, my husband and Three Friends, who, as in Baber's time, shared our hot-weather excursions into the City of Tombs. All four have gone, vanished like the elephant procession, and only I remain to finish off the work and tell the tale. Delhi is indeed for us the city of ghosts!

To reassure my fellow passionate pilgrims up and down the world, once we have left Indrasprastha and the horror of the new road to Raisina behind, old Delhi of the forty square miles of tombs seems the same as ever. Our red road runs between cactus and jungle. It is patrolled by silent camels. The Jumna winds as serenely as when it caused our heart-throbs. Humayun's Tomb is as strong in its desolation as when one of The Three Friends watched it and loved it at dawn on hunting days from across the Jumna. He commanded a crack cavalry corps. Now, like Humayun, he lies in a soldier's grave. The Tomb is in red sandstone and white marble, the mysterious sign of the interlaced triangles everywhere in black. The emerald of the mina birds on it is as rich, their blood-red cry as sharp as ever. The porcelain dome, loved and painted by Mortimer Menpes, is behind. It glints as blue as the jay's wing flashing by.

We drove out to the Qtab and found that our forty square

DELHI OF THE DREAM DAYS.

miles have, after all, been encroached upon by the devouring monster of the new capital. New walls run up to the old domes of fierce Moghul warriors. Stacks of bricks are all along the route. A bungalow has even been built into a tomb and a stucco Venus of Milo was in the mehrab, thus breaking the pledge, after '57, of Victoria R.I. For, with the Moslem, a tomb is a mosque, and sacred.

Arrived at the Qtab, we found a new dak bungalow had been erected. In it vandals, white, tan, and black, were drinking and smoking. It is now evidently a week-end and official honeymoon resort. In the outer courts of Prithiraj and Sunjogta! Beneath the gorgeous crimson pistil of the Indian Campanile! Beside the tender bouquet of rose tints, surrounded by soft greens, of Alla-o-Din's mosque! The loveliest polychromatic decorations in the world! Amir Khusru sang of it six centuries ago as,

> The depository of the grace of God,
> The music of its prayer reaches to the moon.

Raisina, like a monstrous octopus, has thrown her tentacles even here, one of the sweetest spots in the world. This gigantic horror, of the evil omens, has swallowed up our old Delhi. We can only cry "Ichabod!" The Delhi of dreams for us and for the world.

Good-bye Delhi! Good-bye! Good-bye!

Now for the real India! Venus is so fine and large to-night one has to look twice to see if she is a star, or a

lamp? The bearer is squatting like a kangaroo in eager pow-wow with a neighbour's servant. Next day we attend the midday Friday service at the Jama. It holds thirty thousand worshippers, of which three thousand were present in kaleidoscopic hues. Two muezzins on high, above the multicoloured crowd, gave the call to prayer. Their robes were of the same sage and violet beloved at St. Roch. Only the white turban replaced the black biretta. The big tank served the identical purpose of the holy-water font. The bara moulvies in the oyster pearly mehrab are as learned as their Western brethren. And then man dares to quarrel with his neighbour for worshipping differently from him the creator of the Milky Way!

What a far cry from the box of honour of the Dames de Service, from the mellow marbles of St. Roch, to the screened women's rear of the gorgeous Jama Musjid! What strange priests have prayed for me, from the ascetic Cardinal Archbishop of Paris, the ancient prior of the Carthusian Monastery among the vines of Florence, to the mighty Moslem Moulvie of Delhi! From the crude salvationist to the subtle brahman!

In how many different tongues, in how many Cathedrals, Mosques, and Temples over the world have I heard that earnest prayer! A prayer of hope, from beings bravely digging at the Riddle of Life and Death! As I listen, a sombre reflection steals over me. I, too, have striven to know that Secret, many times sincerely seeking knowledge,

but sometimes stirred by wretched fears. And as I realize this, I no longer seem a stranger in the Mosque, but one of that gathering and a member of a vast faith whose creed is a pathetic confession of human weakness.

We visited John Nicholson's statue at the Kashmir Gate, his uniform, beard and whiskers contemporary with Papa. Also the Ridge. Saw a jackal near the deserted mosque as of yore. The perfect proportions of the eggs and taller slender minarets of the Jama rising opposite the Fort across the Jumna and groves of trees. So must Nicholson have watched it and wondered in the evening of the old days. When he heard of the elephant procession in the Chandni Chowk, and the brief restored glories of the Moghul pantaloon, he must have wondered, " what those devils were up to behind the city walls." In the evening, at Sultan Singh's with a high initiate, heard the muezzins calling out all round Delhi from the mosques. The house is at Kashmir Gate, in a secluded garden of palms. " That sound is inspiring," he said, " because it is far away, calling to spiritual things above the sordid ones." Outside my room a boy servant of an Indian prince next door reads all day long from the Ramayana, one of the oldest books of the outer world, the story of a great bhakta, Ravenna, who closed the door of heaven to someone in mistake. Because separation from his Lord was agony to him, he chose the severest and quickest form of expiation, that his vision should be clouded while he worked for the wicked ones who are also agents of the

Law. Of the deva, Hanuman, who worked in the body of a monkey for the Good. Of Mina, the parrot, who flew out and attacked Ravenna when he made off with the goddess Sita, worshipped throughout the Aryavarta as purer than purity itself.

Lucknow. The umbrella domes again of the old Kings of Oudh, and, beneath, the House of the Sibyl, an Indian Sibyl of the root brahmani branch, and therefore the mother of the Vestals, the Oracle of Delphi, and the Pythoness, inspired under reeking fumes from the cavern's mouth. By miraculous power, she has risen from a death-bed of diabetes and sits on her divan a young and smiling woman again. The ancient rule *re* Sibyl and Tarquin obtains to-day. If there is a failure, the way is made more difficult. "The karma of your past life which brought you to me, to Them, and to Mahadev's Temple, is done," she says. "As you love your body and Parisian chefs, in your case a brahman cook is necessary for you to proceed further." Just then a skinny, half-naked man came in, carrying a brass tray on which was an unsavoury mess of dahl, etc. "That is what you will have to eat."

THE MYSTERY OF HOLY KASHI AND THE HIDDEN TEMPLE

Hell! They consider it treason to believe that any other part of the world is just as good as their own. Christ! they're all off!—Sometimes a nigger's as good as a white man; yellow and brown and black aren't necessarily heathen; they don't worship idols any more than you or I do. . . .

Hell! Everybody worships idols. Maybe it's a woman, maybe it's a cross, or maybe it's just a piece of wood carved and painted to look like a God. What's the difference, they're all symbols? Often I think that people are symbols too, sort of a joke that God played on earth. . . .

THE BEACHCOMBER.

Softly the moonbeams' pale glory illumed
  The sacred waters laving her dark shore;
The boat now glided in the silver splendour,
  While legends were retold from Hindu lore.
Passing along with the stream's silent flow,
  The peace of the evening sank into our breast;
The temple bell's note, stealing over the water,
  Brought its message of calm to the world's unrest.

BENARES.

Do you recall those solemn hours we spent
  Upon the Ganges late one evening,
When slowly gliding down the stream, we went
  Along the city's length, and reddening
The heavens there was a wondrous blaze of light
  Which quickly mantled round the limbs of earth?

ON THE GANGES.

The world shall end when I forget.

THE further East, the more curious nature becomes. Regiments of giant cranes, some black, some grey, are side by side with herds of buffaloes, submerged in the marshes, and droves of pigs with furry backs. Camel caravans become more numerous, and the feathery bamboo and banyan

groves are all along the route. We are in the land of "the Perfect!"

Arrived at the station, before the train stops, we see "Hindu Refreshment Room" for the hundred thousand pilgrims who form a floating third of the population. Descending from the grimy compartment, at once the sweet keen influence of the Great Lord of Yoga is even there. In the hotel, a bower of bougainvillea and orange venusta, voices are hushed by His influence. All rancour, bitterness, sense of grievance, dies down. Also sense of hurry, unrest. Time will be given to do our karma. The English padre of the church opposite, also hung with gorgeous creepers, says, "No church is so spiritual as this." "Yes," I reply, "because of the hundred thousand always here expressly to seek the Holy Spirit. Their prayers bring the Peace." In the churchyard are evangelical monuments, urns on fluted pillars, and no crosses, of military heroes dating from 1785. The gold mohur tree opposite my window is not in flower yet, but its gnarled brown velvet trunks might be those of an elephant.

Treves wrote of Kashi as the City of Trampled Flowers. It is only two days before Shivrathri, so the flowers are heaped high in sweetest masses, white and yellow, on the brass trays outside the Golden Temple. The Tagore motor-car calls for me at 5 p.m. Mr. Tagore is a brahman of princely family. The Maharajah spent twenty thousand pounds to send his heir to Europe to celebrate King Edward's

Coronation. Mr. Tagore takes tea with me. His cosmopolitan library is superb. But he enters the holy temples with bared head, and is himself erecting one on Dassasamedh Ghat, the Thrice Holy. This is typical of the classes, as well as of the masses who throng the streets and ghats. On Dassasamedh is a white Rolls-Royce. The blinds are down, but we catch a peep of the purdah nashin inside. She is the mother of the Maharajah of Mysore, premier Hindu prince of India. We wind through the narrow alleys, pushing the cows out of our way. [N.B.—Their products, like Gunga water, have been analysed as highly antiseptic.] In the city's heart we pass the mansion of the dowager Maharani of Darbanghah. We gain Bisheshwar, and shiver as the Shiv Influence radiates around. We see where Aurungzeb destroyed the great courts and stuffed a second mosque upon them, as well as the high minarets on the ghats. Poor Aurungzeb! They cost an Empire! We reach Dassasamedh again. We descend. Two state barges with scarlet canopies, couches and servants await mighty Mysore, the second ruler of Hindustan, who is guest of H.H. of Benares for the Great Day. Ramnagar, his palace, is in a rosy glow on the other side. The kaleidoscope is as lovely and dazzling as ever, the coloured crowds as dense, the peacocks and pinks, the oranges and yellows. The palaces of Darbanghah and the others as imposing as of yore. Oh, Peace and Rest of the River, reflected in the faces of the pilgrims and in our own hearts! Is she not more and more

lovely flowing down the river of years? Oh, Home, sweet Home!

We row up-stream, passing, high on the ghat near Dassasamedh, a living temple of white occultism, close to the new Tagore site. At last we reach Kedarnath Ghat, crowned, up seven flights of steps, with a temple used by the Dark Side. Its bell clangs ominously. The light is lurid from the dark interior up above. The ascetics eye us furtively and disagreeably down below, with sidelong glances, squatting at their devotions and bathing in the stream. It is a poor and shabby crowd compared with those we have passed. The Brothers of the Shadow live in poverty and squalor.

Far up the stream, commanding the whole river, stands a large white mansion. For many years a site for that house could not be found. Once built, a flood engulfed it. Serene and imposing, it rises anew. Just so. Good is bound to triumph, bad to fail. Or the worlds would end.

At last we gain Harischandra, the black and white striped monument of a sati's love. Beyond is one of the Maharajah of Benares' houses. This was used as a prison for the Delhi Princes. From there the loyal Maharajah, chased by mutineers, rushed up a trap-door and jumped into a boat, rowing to Hastings' side.

We drift back down-stream to the Jey Singh Observatory. It has an elaborate and perfect sundial, besides other star-gazing apparatus. Jey Singh of Amber and the Lord of

PYRES OF KASHI.

Kashi were of the Magi. And now we reach Manikurnika, the Burning Ghat. "There are only two to-night," remarks Tagore. "I have seen six or eight. My father's body was burnt here, and so will mine be."

The Maharajah of Benares is the Regent of Mahadev, who is the Lord of Kashi. So when he entered the Benares Hindu University the students all shouted "Mahadeo!" whilst His Excellency the Viceroy was received in silence.

We have seen that the Maharajah of Benares has two palaces, one on either side of the river. Although, as a rule, he prefers the rosy light of Ramnagar to the stern porticos opposite, he is careful to resort there when ill, and his predecessors have died there. *This is the holy side.* It was so even in the days of the great sage, Vyasa, of the Mahabharat. Having built an ashram on the wrong side, Durga, in the form of a blind and deaf beggar-woman, asked him three times his reason. When he persisted that he served Shiv on the unblessed side, she changed him into an ass. Which things are an allegory.

As once more we ascend the stream the two fires where the two corpses are being burnt are the brightest points of flame on all the ghats, and showers of sparks fly up. Spectral figures attend the last rites. It is getting dark. The Holy Mother on the stream, her palaces, her temples, her minarets, her flights of stairs, her crowds, her rites, her worship, become more and more mysterious with an Unseen Influence, charged with a brooding mystery, deeper and of a different,

more pregnant, insistent nature than that which broods o'er the lagoons of Venice at even, or in the white mists of Northern seas.

As we leave our barge and ascend Thrice Holy Dassassamedh, more mystic than ever in the twilight with the clanging temples, there are sleepers wrapt in the ascetic's shrimpy, skimpy rags on the steps. They have spent their last pice to get here from the uttermost parts of Ind. *Drawn by what?*

Kashi is the quickener of Karma. Between the bridal tour and the widow's rest many lives have been lived. Kashi is the Healer of hell's wounds. The inferno was necessary to break the rakshasha's power. Kashi is the Door of Heaven. Will her portals open this side of the Styx?

Several of the temples in Kashi have been pointed out to me as living temples by an initiate friend. One in particular, on the left of Dassasamedh, with a red dome, always fascinates me as a storehouse of occult power, the mystic sense is so strong there. It is frequented by black adepts at midnight as by the white at daybreak. For the two are ever inseparable, and the devil shelters beneath the cathedral spire. The marble bulls of Mahadev are in the courtyard.

In descending from the precincts of this temple one afternoon I descried far down on the ghats below a large crowd seated. The ghats are very high and steep, and my head reels at heights and flights of all sorts, but, cautiously

descending, I found a learned brahman seated reading on a buttress of the ghats. Behind him in a semicircle were rows of ascetics in the ashes and ochres of Shiv. In front was an attentive crowd of hundreds seated in silence on the ghats. He was reading from the Bhagavad Purana. It was a lovely sight. The brahman's spiritual, rapt face was crowned by an orange turban, for all the shades of yellow are Shivite. Round his neck was a chaplet of marigolds. The crowd was a rainbow stir-about except where two widows sat apart in pure white. The brahman's face and black locks under the orange turban were framed by the sparkling blue of the Ganges. Close by was one of the green and white barges which have navigated here for millions of years. Far away the halls where the Maharajah of Benares lives shone opposite the mansion which His Highness has recently redeemed from the Delhi princes and restored to our ancient faith. The brahman finished reading the Purana, and instantly from the crowd of Shivites and Vishnavites respectively were cries, fervent yet reverent, of "Mahadev, Ram! Ram!" Oh, if only Christian missionaries would grasp the family motto of the Maharajahs of Benares: "There is no religion higher than truth." Then the brahman turned to an exposition of Sankara, the profoundest teacher of Vedeanta. And still the crowd sat in rapt silence. Next afternoon I donned the ascetics' dress and joined them. Wandering along the ghats afterwards, beneath the towering portals of Darbangha, a Hindu

gentleman staying there offered to show me inside. The halls were exquisitely carved, the balcony pillars divinely fluted, but all deserted. Every good Hindu must visit Kashi at least once in his life. The leading Hindu Princes, therefore, all have mansions there. Each mansion has a temple attached, heavily endowed by the princely builder. My guide told me that between us and the Dassasamedh Ghat, only a few yards, the temple endowments came to several lacs. "Are you here on a pilgrimage?" I asked "I am here on a very sad duty," he replied. "My wife is dying of phthisis. Her days are numbered. She wished to die in Kashi, so, though it was against medical advice, her desire was so intense I thought it right to bring her here. We arrived two days ago. She has visited the Bisheshwar temple and already she is very much happier."

Outside the gate of the temple sits a sadhu on a bed of spikes. When he dies he will not be burnt like common men. He needs no purification by fire. He will be wrapped in a piece of sackcloth, a stone will be tied to his legs, and he will be dropped into the river, but in spite of the dead saint the people will go on with their bathing and drinking.

A little life of a few hours flickered out one evening. Amid the wailing of the poor little mother, the corpse, wrapped like a parcel in all the swaddling-clothes, even to the mauve woolly shawl, for otherwise they would have been destroyed, was handed to the nearest male relative. He took the parcel outside. I followed.

"What are you going to do?"

"I am going to throw it in the Gunga," he replied.

The Rev. E. Graves writes: "There are blind alleys and dust-heaps indescribable, and yet Benares is a healthy spot. Let the visitor wander and wonder." The Rev. C. P. Cape writes: "That people have great faith in the sacred properties of the stream is evident from the fact that they go on drinking its water, although close by the huge city sewer belches forth its filth."

Oh, foolish missionaries, who has bewitched you that having eyes ye see not!

On the way to Benares I had spent a month of farewell to the outer life amongst the palaces of the old Kings of Oudh at Lucknow, where the Chutter Mungil gleams pearly white beneath its gold umbrella. Here a lecture had been announced on Indian sculpture. Beautiful limelight views were shown of the new excavations at Sarnath amongst many others. On inquiry of the Commissioner, who had taken the chair, as to who had paid the piper, he said he had not the slightest idea. Not a breath of aught to throw suspicion that the Y.M.C.A. pulled the wires and that the three following lectures would be aggressively Christian. This somewhat Jesuitical proceeding on the part of the Y.M.C.A. caused me to revisit Sarnath, where the Buddha first preached after his Enlightenment and subsequent visit to Holy Kashi before commencing his mission. I found that since my first visit, many years before, the Archæological

Department had excavated memorial pillars, with hundreds of images of the Buddha and his disciples, many life-size and of much beauty. A brand new museum, built on the spot, contained these last. Well, there are some who would prefer the old days of quiet sunny beauty untouched, the banyans and bamboos and green eastern poppies, the same which Buddha saw and where the influence of the great Avatara is instantly sensed by the receptive soul, to all the restless activities of the Archæological Department, who have recently tidied Indrapat and planted a smart new park round the Qtab.

Christmas Day. The hotel full of roses and good cheer, of the sweet influences streaming from the Georgian Church opposite. The moment one turns the corner of the dusty and rowdy bazaar, one comes into its sphere of influence. Of the velvet of the classical pillar to the mutiny veteran and of the delicate carpet in the churchyard of tiny blue bird's-eye, scarlet pimpernel, and miniature pink and yellow flowers and white, transparent convolvulus starring the sod. As one walks over them one wonders if "they trouble stars." Of that other matured garden of "the Company," dating from pre-mutiny days, all glorious in many colours against the cypress. The lemons make a brave show in a forest of old gold balls in a forest of bougainvillea. Went with a Harvard Professor of psychology to the Theosophical Convention. The grounds were ablaze with colour, the lovely kaleidoscope of shawls and saris, gorgeous violet

cassocks of handsome and courteous young priests, scarlet acolytes, and crimson and gold of the presiding Bishop, who had come from Java at Mrs. Besant's express request. The Convention was, in fact, a confused delirium of bright colours and gorgeous ceremonies: of an aged Bishop in magenta, trailing robes bound by a golden scarf and recalling his past lives. Of another in a white pashmina shawl with an "arhat" wife, a Hindu Madame Butterfly, flitting about in a gorgeous sari of scarlet and gold with round black eyes and luxuriant raven locks. Of a great concourse of the cream of intellectual India, whose countenances proclaim them such, of every type, from icy mountains to coral strand: of a goodly number of whites from many countries whose faces proclaimed their goodness. Of the communal singing in which East and West joined: of banners from every land, including from Queretero. Of gorgeous ceremonies of the Mass, and incense from "the Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament" from an altar heavily massed with roses perfuming the tent. And of fakirs in saffron rags who had strolled in from the temples to participate in this *omnium gatherum*. Of the Maharajah of Darbangha, who told me Udaipur was the only other orthodox ruler left. For orthodoxy involved trouble in washing tables and selves before and after meals. Moderns are not inclined for this. The approaching visit to Amarnath would do wonderful things if the pilgrimage were undertaken in the proper spirit. To sleep in the cave was desirable. A British Colonel had

broken off a piece of the ice lingam inside and swallowed it. Soon after he committed suicide. The late orthodox Maharajah of Udaipur had told him this.

And over it all brooded the mighty Moghuls in the art show. Only absent is Akbar. Could he have foreseen this? Could Jehangir? Who pressed on a deprecating Jesuit priest his largesse of four camels from his transport train of 70,000 for his household utensils to the Deccan, in addition to the elephants.

Well, it is not our line of occultism, of the Hidden Temple, but who shall say that that is entirely wrong which leavens the earth with good? A Pope's personality does not affect his doctrine. Catholics tell us one or two Popes have been wrong on morals, never wrong on doctrine.

Of the Major's wife from Travancore in the far south. She called it the India of her dreams, of sailing over lagoons heavily perfumed with spice-laden air. Of climbing ghats sentinelled with giant trees, spanned by six men, climbed by gorgeous creepers; of purple clouds of giant butterflies, large as a man's hand, in two shades of violet and mauve, like giant Beaconsfield pansies, never less than six or seven together on the spicy zephyr; of seeing new "huts" on the horizon of a grassy plain, huts which moved nearer and became a herd of elephants; of a survey employé who, working at a chain and hearing a row, reported his glen full of the soft greys of elephants and offered to catch a baby for the mem-sahib; of the tree-men, lowest of the human

family on earth, who stored their grain in trees, less differing from monkeys than from highest man. All these she had seen in the day's work of the survey and still lived daily and hourly on the marvel and delight of it.

Kashi is the quickener of our karma. In her womb lies the future. Confronted by the Mighty Forces of which she is the fulcrum, the outer life becomes vague and shadowy, all the world recedes cold and far.

Eve of Shivrathri. Sent for a man to lock a box. He cannot come to-day. Locksmith and lady join in devotions.

The Kuchnar trees like giant azaleas against the cobalt inverted bowl. Some in tones of orchids, some snowy white, all transparent and palpitating like butterflies against the blue.

A new tree out in the lovely matured "Company" garden of the old East Indian days, in which walked the Evangelical heroes whose urns and pyramids are *vis-à-vis* to the hotel. This resembles a banyan with spreading branches and dark glossy foliage, until you go beneath it and see the gorgeous orange clusters, stellated like lilac, secreted beneath by their own waxy weight, forming a tent of flame. One sits inside and watches the humming-birds, some greeny black, some fawny grey, all with long bills pecking at the orange bunches. One orange and black butterfly completes the scheme. The tree's name is jelesia, or Asoka tree, and symbols jealousy, in contradistinction to the neam's modesty and sweet scent. Only the pervading

perfume makes one look up and see the shy green blossoms hiding midst the feathery foliage.

Went to a little upstairs shop in the heart of the city where the floor was covered with a sea of silks, and Herod's kincobs in every colour of the rainbow, and gold, and silver. We were garlanded with sweet white flowers and scented with attar of roses. Looking through the balcony, it overhangs that ancient heart of Hinduism, the old Bisheshwar Temple. Descending a flight of stairs and threading the narrow streets, we crossed the Temple courtyard where bronzed priests wind orange draperies, His sacred colour. We pass on to the new golden Bisheshwar. We stand outside the front entrance listening to the clanging bell of the Temple, and shivering at the Shivite vibrations coming from the unseen shrine within! Though it was in the heat of the early afternoon, and not the hour for worship, the early morning, the Holy of Holies, seen through the peep-hole at the side, was besieged by worshippers with orange garlands and smoking incense. All we could see were some priests clothed only in loin-cloths reading aloud from books and clanging the Temple bell. Concealed by silver pillars were the worshippers of the Lingam seen through the peep-hole. But all worldly thoughts dropped dead. All the schemes for worldly advancement became tawdry, killed by the vibrations of the most powerful exoteric temple on the planet of Mahadev, known in the West as the Holy Ghost.

Then we passed the Well of Knowledge and regained the old Temple. We searched carefully for the passage before mentioned. But *all we could see* was the Temple courtyard in the Heart of Hearts of the most fascinating and mysterious city of our earth.

Shivrathri. The first spring tree, the sagunta, is in all its glory to-day. Of the leguminosæ, almost leafless, the delicate white flowers make the boughs like giant ostrich plumes tossing against the bright blue sky. Above their bouquets hovered one white butterfly and two in orange and black, a sight of breathless beauty.

A brahman of knowledge has come to conduct my devotions on this Day of Days, the greatest Day of the year. We offer great orange bunches of the venusta or Indian glorified honeysuckle to my husband, thus fulfilling the whole Hindu duty of woman.

He says that the other great Day of the year is the Wesek Festival during the full moon in April, North of Thibet. It is held by Lord Buddha, not in the physical body, though he can take that when he wishes. He holds a golden rod, highly magnetized, and no one else is allowed to touch it. This festival is held every year for members of the White Lodge, the Gurus and those disciples who deserve it, in the astral body. The plan of work for the following year is settled. On these two great occasions my friend allows what happens to come back to his physical consciousness, never on other occasions, unless it is to help someone.

The spiritual history of this high chela is interesting. Long ago he was the schoolfellow of another boy of still higher spiritual destiny. The friendship of the two boys was destined to be lifelong, in which one boy should lead the other. We will call them A. and B. B. belongs to an old Benares family which, though not of the brahman caste, being a kshattrya, is considered by the caste as equal to brahmans, the founder of the family having been a yogi. They live in an old-world mansion in the heart of the city, whose portal is guarded by an armed retainer. The ladies keep strict purdah, the blind of their carriage, on the rare occasions when they leave home, being only lowered after dusk. My friend, having as a young man spiritual aspirations, used to spend two hours daily at his puja, during which a sage used to come astrally and teach him. Afterwards, as so many have done, he recognized his Guru by the two portraits given by the eastern Seer in the West to a select few of her pupils, as the Master K. H.

He took, however, the first initiation by the help of his old schoolfellow A., who was still further advanced in the higher life. Mr. A. wears a ring which has been magnetized by the Great Ascetic Himself. It never leaves his person, but one day he allowed B. to take hold of hand and ring together. That evening when B. returned to the old-world mansion in the heart of Kashi, taken always in eastern sibylline books as the symbol of the human heart, alone in the silence of his puja room, B. saw the Lord of Yoga,

WIDOWS OF KASHI. (I)

Mahadev Himself, who appeared to him on consecutive evenings for over a week. This account of the initiation of B. was first related to me by A., and then, years after, by B. himself, the details exactly agreeing.

B. recently related to me another account of the help afforded to him by A. They were sitting together on a verandah with the late Rai Sahib Peare Lal of Delhi, an old man now passed, who had seen Delhi drenched with mlenchcha blood by mutineers, and who was himself a high initiate, though he knew little of it in waking hours. When all three were in full waking consciousness, A. touched the hand of B., when, *hey presto!* they found themselves together at Adyar in the presence of the Mahatma Maurya, the Seer, Bertram Keightley, and others. B. had time to note exact details before he found himself in his chair on the verandah again. He then wrote to Bertram Keightley and received written confirmation of all he had seen in the astral body.

This devotee has since been made a brahman. Contrary to the general idea, in esoteric Hinduism all is open to all men, an all-comers' stake, only the necessary qualities asked. He made a pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Jaganath in Orissa. Before starting his food was cooked for him by his mother, a widow, and therefore holy person. On the journey he cooked it for himself. Arrived at Jaganath, in entire devotion, a vision was granted by the Great Ones to Their faithful servant. He saw an aspect

of Vishnu which included the opposing forces, those whom we know to our cost as the dark people.

Now in connection with these two schoolfellows, I can supply further interesting information to occult students. A., as Colonel Olcott himself told me, was a brilliant young graduate and barrister of the High Court of Calcutta. But he wished for a quieter life and was at one time the master of a school. Among his pupils was one whom older members of the Indian T.S. will remember as T. N. He was *born* a Jivanmukta, or one who has no more to learn as far as our solar system is concerned. So that He was much higher even than His schoolmaster A., who at that time had not attained anything like his present position in the occult hierarchy. Out of school hours, therefore, the positions of teacher and pupil were reversed. A. had at that time a pupil whom he much loved and was anxious that his pupil should be initiated further into esoteric Hinduism and asked T. N. to confer the boon of the next step. T. N., who saw clearer than A.'s love allowed him to do, refused to do so many times. At length, pressed by A., T. N. conferred the boon. It is for those who can read between these lines to judge, in the light of subsequent events, whether T. N. or A. was the wiser.

T. N. went over to Burmah to magnetize the temples there, so that those entering should feel the peace and calm emanating from the great Jivanmukta's erstwhile presence, without knowing the cause. He was so mighty in Yog,

that on one occasion He even injured the chief of the dark forces, Beelzebub, the Prince of the Power of the Air, Satanas, Mephistopheles, Ahriman in the old Persian phrase, the devil himself. For doing this He was rebuked by the White Lodge, who said that Mahadev and They, His servants, allowed the dark forces to exist as points of leverage, fulcrums, to test the strength of our good qualities. "Why did you do that?" they said. "We allow him to exist. Mahadev made him and myrmidons for His divine plan. Therefore He allows them in His holiest temple beyond the sun." The solution of the old, old problem of the existence of evil. *There* is its use, since Eve and the Snake. Some have considered this old problem identical with the problem of sex. The popular idea is that the Snake tempted Eve on this point. That before, her relations with Adam were platonic. Mrs. Besant has given out that sexual excess is allied to black magic.

It will be seen from the above what rubbish it is for Fleet Street scribes to say Hindus are born, not made. *Anyone*, from Akbar to aborigine can, and has been, made a Hindu, who can pass the tests. These are not too hard at first, but increase in severity with the progress, and therefore increased responsibilities, of the candidate.

Eventually the Fury of the Asuras against T. N. was so great that He allowed them to kill His physical body. To stay down here would have meant a greater expenditure of spiritual force than He considered justified.

I have personally verified the truth of the statement made to me by another high chela when I first came to Benares, in this incarnation, many years ago. He told me the meaning of that passage in the Gita :

> From food creatures become ; from rain is the production of food ;
> Rain proceedeth from sacrifice ; sacrifice ariseth out of action.

" There is an occultists' temple in Benares where that still happens. Where the image becomes alive with the presence of Shiv. But that temple is hidden. It is easy to do this. It is like looking for a thing. It may be there all the time, and you don't see it," he added with a smile.

For many years I have been a chiel among advanced pupils taking notes. Now these same advanced pupils (some of them called even by those who differ from them " great occultists ") have recently become extremely reticent, shut up like clams. " Please tell me what the Masters think," etc. " I cannot. So much imposture is being dumped ' from Them.' I can only tell you what I think." But in many years with them and from a little personal observation, I have gathered the following.

In addition to the several Masters of the Seer, my limited experience has assured me that there is Another, the Head of the Lodge, the Initiator, who personally gives the initiations Himself, with only the earth Guru present, in the astral body of course, to reassure the trembling candidate at this stupendous event. The neophyte leaves

neither his room nor his bed, when the door of Heaven opens only for a moment, only his body. On these occasions it is a case of deeds not words.

I believe this Initiator to be the same as the Lord of the World of the Seer, who came from Venus at the time of the end of the third race. I know He has never been a man in this cycle of evolution. He taught the sacred language, Senzar, of which I have heard occultists speak, to the third and fourth races. The adept kings had prepared a mystic town for His work with immense fortifications or foundations of brick. That mystic town still exists, and there the next root race, of a more glorious age and powers than ours, is being prepared. Also the work of preparation is led by the Seer's two Masters, who have literally, therefore, " thousands of worshippers."

In the " Pedigree of Man," page 81, we read of the tenth or Kalki Avatar of Vishnu, which will end the materialism of the Kali Yog, whose depths we are now approaching. Caste, a divine institution, is being swept away. Hence the destruction of the great families and the uprising of the man in the street to make a general levelling until brighter days dawn. This has taken place even in the twenty-five years since Mrs. Besant wrote. A new Satya Yog, with a more spiritual race, will succeed this dreary age, a race now typified *by the few*. I also know that the Head of the Lodge, the Initiator, does not live permanently on this planet, but in the Real Shiv Temple, but is immediately accessible

to His devotees on their thought, "like sending a wireless," and also conducts the worship in the concealed physical occultists' temple on this planet where the Mightiest, Mahadev, comes. Also I know that Mahadev has two attendants who immediately serve Him, one being a deva who plays the flute. The other frequently visits a holy Shivite family in their bungalow, and even on a quiet road on drives. It is an evolution different from ours, which, like the Buddha, can take a physical body on desire.

The Initiator, or Great Master, rings a small bell, as an ordinary Guru does, to call the pupils. There is an entire orchestra of Indian instruments, as in the ordinary worship. The mantra is intoned by adepts. The fire is kept burning by the Gurus, who bring the physical material necessary for it. The worship never ceases. "They serve Him day and night."

The mode of initiation appears to vary with different pupils, but it always takes place on Shivrathri, which varies with the new moon in spring. This always means drawing near in some way to Shiv, who, in the West as the Holy Ghost, presides over Involution. The Initiator is the personal Guru of advanced pupils. His intervention is the only safe way of rousing Kundalini. One of his lessons appears most apposite to-day.

He appeared to a female chela—and when he comes the whole house is illuminated—holding a child in his arms. "What does she say?" asked the brahmani. "She says,"

replied the Guru of Gurus, "I am Peace. All the world seeks for me, just as they do for money. Take me. Be peaceful."

I am also able to state that the Seer resumed her work in the "night schools" a few months after reincarnation. Between the lives she rested in an occult temple in a certain sinister form imposed upon her by the dark forces. Then she agreed to reincarnate in order to work off certain karmic debts. Thus, the Upasika Ultimata, the last word of the Mysteriarcha of the nineteenth century, whose portrait hangs from icy mountain to coral strand, from Seine's side to Gunga's banks.

As to her pupil, Damodar, in the new book of "Letters from the Masters," page 7, there is confirmation of what I heard many years ago from two sources, that he took the last journey to Thibet under dark influences brought upon him by "romancing," got among black adepts, and died there. In the Temple there is intoned a Bhagavad Gita so powerful it brings all the Gods. The dark powers have the same. When they recite this, the White Masters have to checkmate them with their own recitations to prevent the havoc they would otherwise wreak on the planet. Noticing the exhaustion of a high initiate one morning, he replied, "There is generally work to be done at night." On other days, when he was taciturn, it meant the dark machinations were active.

Any pupil, of East or West, who is sufficiently pure has

access to this Temple. Each real brahman or brahmani of knowledge, not only of the thread, has his or her appointed place in this Holy of Holies. But the younger chelas go always in charge of an elder, as the vibrations are so powerful that they would kill, though sometimes they are allowed to go home to bed by their own power. Albeit Mahadev is not *always* there, only sometimes, and on these occasions malas or rosaries may be taken to touch His feet. And so the Mahadev of this Temple is only a shadow of the real Mahadev of the Temple beyond the sun, of the universe.

At a very early stage of the Path, the music of the Temple of this planet may be heard, even during waking hours, by the Shivite, in any place on the planet, and at all hours. But it is most intense at the hours of worship, morn and eve, the same of course as in the outer temples. As a general rule the sense of smell is next awakened, to perceive the presence of a Master by His peculiar perfume. Then, after further testing of the moral nature by the ever useful dark powers, sight is awakened. Still at an early stage on the Path the candidate can, first occasionally, later at will, see the interior of the Temples, the worship taking place there and the Gurus conducting it. The controlled use of this faculty has just come to a lifelong friend, a brahmani who, in her last life, worked her decrepit, dropsical old body to death for the world. It came spontaneously, without previous effort, in her lovely young body at the age of twenty-two.

In addition to this physical Temple of the Lord of the Universe, there are others, and some to his female aspect, Durga, all of ancient design. One of these was like those old towers which exist, no one knows why, in Ireland, remnants of fourth-race worship, only higher. Like them, it had no opening. The astral body pierces stone. It gets in without. Another had gigantic Hindu images, one standing, others fallen about the place, apparently a cave temple. This was only brought to the brain by a lucky chance. If the Guru thinks the pupil deserves to remember, he just touches him before and after the nocturnal excursion. The astral body is electric, and the lucky one will get, apparently, a knock on the head, before and after, and something wonderful in between. On this occasion, the pupil being refractory "down under" at the time, apparently a happy accident of a touch "up there," brought back to bed with a jump and a clear view of the above. All the living temples, where the real occultists worship, appear to be ancient.

February 14th. Spring is still further advanced. Clouds of white butterflies above the delicate sagunta to-day, and a squirrel scrambles up its cinnamon stem. Vertically striped, for Ram Himself once extended three fingers in blessing on a squirrel's back and so his people have been striped ever after. The sagunta's exact antithesis is in all its glory now, India's most gorgeous tree, which sets the jungle on fire for miles. The semal tree has only heavy wax flowers

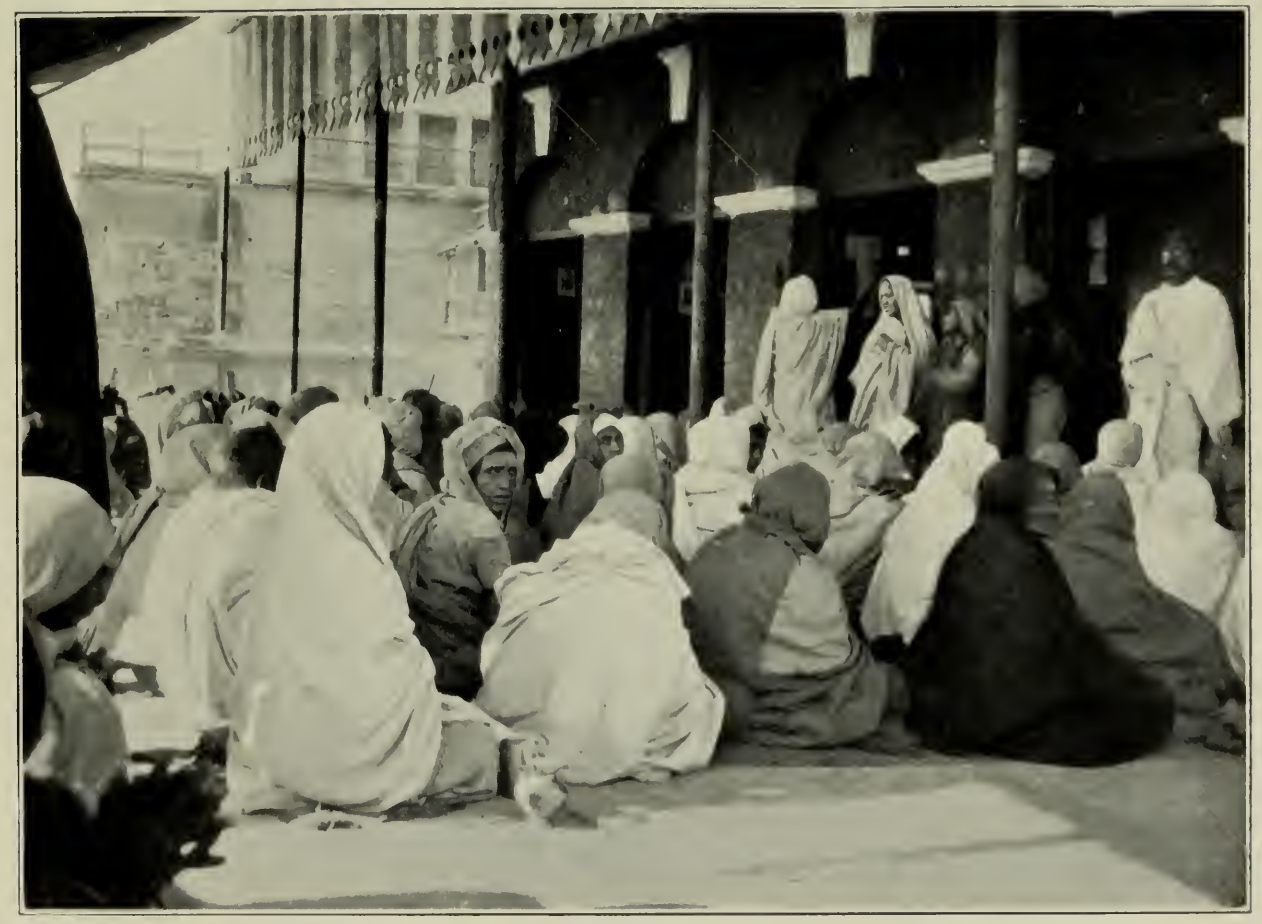
erecting like scarlet cups against the ethereal blue, no leaves. The green corollas are full of honey. A squawking black crow broke one off and carried it in triumph to a bougainvillea thicket on the tree. Came a slip between the cup and the beak. The honey saucer fell with a thud into the dust below. Fell into a little brown crowd who, seeing me tree-gazing, also looked for treasure in Heaven. Imagine magenta imposed on scarlet in aught else but flowers, and realize that God made the flowers and man the fakes.

To observe the above I had to wade through seas of dust between the sanctums of the club and the bank, embowered in sweet peas. As I did so I thought of the city men of Lombard Street, some with equally an eye to beauty, hurrying to office in wind and rain. And there are some to poison the sweet Indian air with their sighs and call her the Land of Regrets! The first breath of the mango's green tassels is delicate, and the perky birds, the hoopoos, with pink frilly crests, bill and mate and strut busily beneath.

I cross the bridge to the hotel, a hotel of God's own country, where

> Owls do cry,
> Bats do fly,
> Jackals scurry by.

I remark a scarlet cup and a few white jessamines in a dusty crevice on the bridge. They seem to be strewn with intention. The stream is a daughter of the great Ma Gunga. There are Hindu characters carved in the stone. I turn



WIDOWS OF KASHI. (2)

and stand on the bridge at midday in the broiling sun and dust and observe. The peasant behind me folds his hands. He mutters a prayer. He is transfigured like the troops who saw the angels at Mons. Mahadev is present even there.

Oh, Lord of the Mysteries of Kashi! Art Thou not worshipped in London to-night? Oh, Thou self-revealing, by Whom the Seven Worlds were made, the Great Ascetic, who sits in meditation in the ice grotto, backed by eternal snows, as in the burning ground, surrounded by the smoking hearts of devotees, has not a Western woman depicted Thee in a holy icon? Hast Thou not deigned to accept the offering, filling her boudoir ashram with the Peace of Shiv?

Oh, Thou who givest to Thy devotees the Third Eye, so that never more are they as blind as other men and moles, give us strength to get Thy greatest boon!

THE MYSTERY OF THE JUNGLE

TIGER IN THE VINDHYAS

Marching on Stiptia,
Marching the parched hill,
Of waving spear grass,
Past the Wardha river.

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

A BROKEN night at Moghul Serai Station. Four hours of train through the jungle. Riotous monkeys swinging. Black pools with regiments of giant black and white cranes gingerly wading, the big bodies poised on flesh-coloured reeds, the transparent bills to match guzzling greedily. Pink pools covered with lichen and, flitting over them, that lovely little green bird whose neck rivals the parrot in delicate *pistache*, ending in a huge black bill, its bronze head and wings glinting coppery in the sunlight.

A wayside station. A Hindu station-master pumping his car in a crowd of derelicts. A little girl carrying a babe, her eye appearing to be falling out but proving to be only an enormous stye. A perilous drive, just escaping a post, a precipice and a pie dog. A bazaar all glass bangles of many colours. A dak bungalow surrounded by fifteen

camels uttering satisfied grunts. The glorious Vindhyas concealing the tigress we are after. These are my first impressions *re* Mrs. Shere.

Next a rough motor-drive into the heart of the mountains, up hill and down dale and across rivers, dodging the timber carts of shy, furtive, apologetic, aboriginal man. He was most useful in pushing us out of a river when we got stodged therein. And always approaching the low, bosky mountain chain ever more and more gorgeous in vegetation. For this is the real India!

Then a halt in a clearing in the forest of teak. A sniffing of the resinous air. A hurried muster of shikaris from all the region round about. A low-toned excited conference, and news of the rare visitation of a tigress. Her pugs have been seen. For, even in India, tigers are few and far, and only when, as now, all are working for love is it possible to see one.

Then an Indian file through the scrub and across a river on stepping-stones. Prickles worm their way up above our knees. Then a silent wait at the base of the hill covered with the golden candelabra of the cactus, and all other shades of umber and amber. One white falcon circles against the blue.

We sit in dead silence below, for the spoor betokens sambur have pre-seated us just here. At first, only the cooing of doves soothes our crowd-worn nerves, and distant imitation of bird whistles. But gradually the cries of

the beaters approach, and scarlet turbans pierce the *feuille-morte* shades of the hill. The head shikari whispers. My host rises to attention, rifle cocked. We watch breathlessly. There is a scurry of the brown forms down the slope to the right. But, for the moment, the mountain has only given birth to four wild dogs, or kogis, and three gorgeous peacocks fly haughtily away in mockery of our disillusion.

Second day. Our forty or fifty furtive, dun-clothed little men, full of forest craft, disappear in the forest. But Mullu and Ramanand remain. They have seen the crocodile, this morning, on the river bank, beneath the red honeysuckle tree. It is a wise old thing, as it has been shot at for twenty years. We creep to the Bardaha, broad, lovely, and unsuspected, hidden in the long grass. But the wise old thing has, even from the far shore, detected boots from bare feet, and has slipped beneath the stream.

We note a peacock's plume, the pug of a female panther, the mark left by her pad and five toes, and two holes made by wild-boar tusks, digging for truffles. We halt by a ford of the same river. It has sheets of blue light, a silvery murmur, and crimson flowers. I am wrapped in a khaki blanket to conceal my black garb. The shikaris whistle like birds. A bear is heard to bark close by. Half a dozen peacocks are up, for the birds are leaders in all jungle affairs and first approach the common pool in time of drought. But the bear, once shot twice shy, sits tight, and the beaters report "nahin." Net results, birds, butterflies and blue-bottles.

We now cross the "fired zone" into the Government preserve. A broad tract is fired to protect not only the beasts, but the trees. One fire from cutters' fires will destroy a whole hill, one village will rob a whole forest. We pass two large holes dug by bears for ants. They are their cruets and sauce. They have left a mulch of red berries, their entremets, in the grass. The scent is getting hotter. We scramble up the dense scrub of the hill. We sit in a clearing littered by spoor of sambur. "This is their sitting-room," says mine host. "The animals take the same walks, drink at the same fords, and squat in the same places daily: they are as regular in their habits as men." In fact there is little difference between them and the Kols. After a marriage ceremony of the latter, the happy pair go off into the jungle empty-handed. They build their own leafy hut, kill and cook their own food. If, after this ordeal, the love lasts, their union is recognized by the tribe. The Kol has to sit up all night with little cries to scare the beasts off his field, if the rains and the birds have allowed it to grow. If eventually he reaps, he has to give half to the landlord. Poor Kol!

Mr. Desai says the Kols are charming people. The town-bred vakils are his bane, seditious and troublesome. The Kols are akin to Kipling's Bhils and Chins.

The river gleams blue far below; but, again, it is a blank draw. We descend the hill, walk along the fired zone, feed and ascend again a hill covered with white feathery

plumes of young bamboo. We are concealed beneath a huge tree. The spoor of red berries betokens recent bear. This is the dense scrub they love. I am wrapped in the khaki blanket and we sit silent in the cool lovely jungle.

> Oh, it is merry in the good greenwood
> Where bulbul and dahiel* are singing.

The distant bird-whistles become near cries of excitement, betokening a find. I sit motionless, breathless; my host rises, rifle cocked.

Suddenly there is a movement among the pale browns to our right, and a head, large as a horse's, emerges and looks at us about ten yards away. It is a supreme moment to see the jungle giving up its quick. My host drops his raised rifle. "It is a female," he whispers and two fawns follow her. They pass unharmed and their hoofs scud the fired zone they cross below. So once more it has been a blank draw. But, as my Indian host says, "We have made progress! We have seen a sambur!"

A day of gorgeous experience, a crowded hour of glorious life near our Mother's heart. Its crowning moment when an elephant, with mahout in orange turban, majestically lumbers along the fired zone to take us home. Our last excitement is a monkey-fight. A black-faced langoor, a babe hanging to her breasts, rushes up a tree to be driven down by the red-faced bandar. No one in India will shoot a monkey, especially here at Chitakut (or "the beautiful

* Blackbird.

hill"), because Rama lived for ten years among them. Rama who is worshipped all over the Aryavarta as the ideal man and king. Sita as the ideal woman, purer than purity itself. Even our elephant is named Lakshman.

The monkeys all united under Hanuman, a deva working in the animal kingdom, to rescue Sita from Ravana. We have previously seen that this bhakta had closed the door of heaven to one by mistake. Separation from God being agony, he chose as punishment a brief period of clouded vision, a short working against the law.

Third day. Mrs. Shere has left these hills in funk of the wild dogs, who are the terror of the jungle. Government has put a price of R.15 on their heads. So to-day we move our camp after her. Half our servants left last night, the rest follow on the fifteen unts with baggage. It is a miniature Akbari bandabust.

We leave on Miss Hathi and lumber eight miles through the good greenwood. We instruct her mahout to make her speak and she grunts approval. Parrots glance and gleam like flashing emeralds along our path. At long last we sight the beehive bungalow in a clearing of big trees. It is a cheery sight with the fires and tents and the murmuring stream; we are cradled in a cup of forest hills concealing *je ne sais quoi!* The air is warm and spicy, Kols are singing.

> And music fills the balmy air,
> And emeralds with bright wings are there,
> Oh, so fair! Oh, so fair!

The collector is the father, philosopher and friend of his district, in this case one hundred by eighty miles. On his annual visitation they all come and pour out their woes to him. Now comes the family of the killed by Mrs. Shere. He promises succour and vengeance on the morrow. He orders a young buffalo to be tied up near the scene of the tragedy. This evening we visit the murmuring stream in search of crocodiles, but the clouds have made them disappear.

So we take the quiet jungle lane to scour for the many panther of the district. We take two sacrificial goats.

We pass pugs of a female panther and her young and, soon after, reach where a little house has been made of leaves and boughs. We enter and are built in, our gun and eyes at a peep-hole. Outside this one goat is tethered. The other is taken off to make it bleat. Lustily bleats the goat. Fast fall the shades of night. Then there is a twittering of birds all round, squall of peafowl, and the goat sits in paralysed silence.

> When sunset lights are burning low,
> While tents are pitched and camp-fires glow,
> Steals o'er us, ere the stars appear,
> The furtive sense of Jungle Fear.

"Something is near," whispers my host. But the panther is the wariest of the jungle, and after waiting in tense silence for an hour, the shikaris and other goat appear saying all is vain. She cometh not. We wend our way home.

VULTURE CIRCLING OVER MRS. SHERE AND HER PREY.

It is cheering to see the unts round the camp fires and to hear our stream again.

Fourth day. So far we have only had blank draws, so I say a special prayer to Mahadev, the Great Lord of the jungle and the wild things therein, on waking. It appears to be heard, for, at breakfast, there is news of Mrs. Shere. She has taken our buffalo.

After breakfast we mount Miss Hathi, and a royal procession of a hundred beaters in pairs precedes. We dismount near the hill. We ascend a nullah of moraines. Mrs. Shere will be fierce and must be got at from a height. We cross the jungle grass of her native haunt which has striped her. Then we have to scale a mountain height of immense rocks torn by volcanic earthquake and storm. Thorns tear our feet and arms. The shikaris haul me up, clinging to gigantic creepers, hanging on to rocks by my eyelashes. My host tears amias fruits and puts them in his pocket as thirst quenchers. From the top of a platform, commanding the valley, vultures are seen circling. This means Mrs. Shere and her prey are there.

So we skirt the side of the mountain with terrific effort and gain another plateau of feathery grass much higher than us. By this time I am about done, and two of the little forest men drag me along to a rocky platform overhanging the vulturous valley, where my host is already seated, rifle cocked.

He pulls out the berries from his pocket; they are bitter,

but a tonic. He says Mrs. Shere *must* pass up one of the two paths below, but we are not to stand when she comes. It is dangerous. The collector of Mirzapur had his scalp torn off by a blow of her paw last week.

The seven little brown men crouch like big apes round us as we hang in mid-air over the forest depths. Tree trunks of brown satin, rocks covered with cream lichen like Spanish lace.

A gleam of orange and black in the dense green of the bamboo! Mrs. Shere is creeping up the immense rocks towards our natural fortress. She sees us and springs up the bastion, her cat-like eyes gleaming, whiskers bristling, claws bared, and scratching. It is the supreme moment of moments!

But she receives the bullet in her breast. With a snarl, she gives a backward leap like a Levantine in dance. She hangs in mid-air, her full length of ten feet extended in a sublime curve. Then, with a mighty roar and thud, she drops into the abyss, to be found and skinned by the beaters. Bathos!

Descending the gorge, we pass a cave with water dripping from red rock roofs. "So," said my host, "did the first man live." The primitive art of hunting is thirty centuries old, as depicted by scenes painted in caves near. We pass the sambur's sitting-room and swing. He catches his fine antlers in the acacia and slides his hoofs to and fro on the ground. Also he has his rubbing-post and licking-rocks.

My host in this jungle week is a Cambridge graduate, but East and West have met in that he is clairvoyant and saw the battle of Rheims a year before the war, smelt the stench of the blood and corpses, and heard the roar of the cannon.

THE MYSTERY OF RAMA AND SITA

THE HOLY HILL OF KAMTANATH

RAMA came here from Fyzabad in exile. It is covered with trees and there are three hundred and sixty temples all round, a school of Sanskrit, and many ascetics in apricot. The great sage Valmiki came here to meet Rama. He had already written the Ramayana, having seen it in the astral light. This was about one million years ago.

Valmiki, having been a hunter and a cannibal in a previous birth, was now a kshattrya, but learned in Sanskrit.

He was reborn three hundred years ago as Tulsi Das, a brahman, to write the Hindi Ramayana, and lived in a hut, still shown on the stream.

Sita was abducted by Ravana, King of Ceylon, who had been born with a clouded brain, his karma for the mistake at the door of heaven. He had seen Sita at her marriage ceremony. She had thrown the garland of choice over Rama, who alone had the strength to bend the bow required by her father on account of her great beauty. Her father, Janaka, was the adept King of Mithila near Kashi. She was born by Yog from a furrow of a plough.

Ravana's sister came disguised as a beggar when Rama went out, having told Sita never to leave the enchanted

circle. The beggar refused to take the alms inside. Ravana sent a deer to get her guardian, Lakshman, away, crying: "Brother Lakshman! I am being killed by beasts!"

Eventually Sita satisfied Rama as to her purity by the ordeal by fire. She passed unscathed through the flames. But Rama, now restored to the throne, had to put her away, to satisfy popular clamour, as "an example." She took refuge with Valmiki. Twin sons were born, who, with his tutelage, became mighty Nimrods. Rama having performed the Aswamedh, the horse wandered into their territory and they were compelled to fight their Divine Father. He recognized His image in their faces and prowess and had now public proof of the chastity of Sita, who is still worshipped throughout the Aryavarta as the ideal Hindu woman, purer than purity itself, who, fulfilling the *one* obligation, became Goddess.

We passed the village of Chitrakot, where there was a tray of golden sweets like tumblers and a mansion for pilgrims, free, from a Calcutta Marwari who is giving R.100,000 simply because Rama, the ideal incarnation of Vishnu, came here to bathe daily from the Hill. This was the first year of his twelve years' exile from the Court of Oudh at Fyzabad, imposed by the stepmother, in fulfilment of the King's vow to give her *anything*, who wanted the throne for her own son.

After a year, the stepbrother came with an army to reinstate him, but Rama replied: "I cannot break my

father's vow," made long before in a moment of pleasure. He went into our Vindhya Hills.

As in all sacred ghats in India, the river, even in the heart of the jungle, is closed by flights of stairs, temples and palaces, all belonging to the Rani of Bijawar, whose motor-car is outside her palace. Her Highness has come from Jhansi for her devotions. Opposite the gates is the palace of another noble family. Nothing is more amazing in India than the way, all over the country, the arid plains suddenly give birth to sacred healing waters, ghats, temples, palaces, and always the sweet quiet atmosphere blessed by the aspirations of the pious devotees.

Karwi. The Peishwa, Amrita Rao, after the Mahratta War, taking jewels, silks, and *luxe* which had been the Poona Court, came here, and, true still to the Gods who had dethroned him, built the beautiful tank and temple in front of the garden house of his palace. This was the brother of the infamous Nana Sahib.

During the Mutiny there was a rebellion led by his sons and a half-brother, son of a Mohammedan girl at Banda, and massacre of the British Deputy Commissioner. Madahot Rao went to Mr. Mayne, the Collector, in a simple palanquin and pleaded innocence. He was, however, found guilty, and moved further into the jungles of Central India. His thirty-six lacs were confiscated, but the interest is still paid to his descendants. The jewels were lost in the general hurly-burly of the Mutiny.

THE MYSTERY VIA MISTS AND SNOWS

Reed slashed and torn, but doubly rich—such great heads as yours drift upon temple-steps, but you are shattered in the wind.—THE LOTUS.

Those whose lives are spent outside the cities know that when the sky is molten brass, when the red flowers flame in the forest, when the blasting wind makes the long rank jungle grass rattle, then old Mother Earth in India takes on a strange fierce strength and beauty, and imparts somewhat of her strength, at least, to those who live close to her.

THIS chapter is headed thus after a letter received by the late Ross Scott, Judicial Commissioner for Oudh and the United Provinces, from the Mahatma Koot Houmi. He once showed me the envelope so addressed from the far-away Thibetan ashram, i.e. "Ross Scott via Mists and Snows." He was sitting in the dak bungalow at Dehra Dun with the Seer when he saw what he first thought was a beetle jumping about on the verandah. Picking it up, the letter inside advised "Escott sahib not to leave by the next train, but to wait to see something interesting."

Leaving Benares on the same quest myself, while absorbed in reading in the train, in a corner of my eye I saw a blaze of red. I thought it was a jungle fire which had recently sent panthers running about a train, but it was only the semal tree blazing scarlet for miles, and not alarming even the monkeys!

April 12th. Left Pindi, the Aldershot of India, in the

mail motor. Gained Murree Heights and suddenly, by daybreak, the snowy range was sprung upon us, breathless from its beauty. It included Nanga Parbat, fourth highest mountain in the world. At Kohala we leave British India and enter in physical nearness the domain of the Great Ones. *Now anything may happen.* In the meantime we find that H.E. the Viceroy has taken possession of Garhi Dak, with the tribe of A.D.C.'s, friends and camp followers incumbent on his state. And a loyal Maharajah entertains him even unto the latest English magazines in his sitting-room. Having wandered in to H.E.'s own bedroom, a breathless Indian camp-officer rushes up for my name in writing! The result of all this is that we have to sleep at Uri. It is a gain, in the loveliness of this dak, set in a bower of pear-trees, only less white than the peaks and cols untrodden above. Birches, more silvery than ever in their leafless spring, glimmer wanly beneath the pale moon. But already the peace of the Great Ones is descending with the even. God will give clear vision to tortured souls at Amarnath! And recall the memory of that first lesson, given in girlhood's days by Him who is the Manu of the sixth Race, yet condescended to say: "You *must* learn that things are not what they seem to be." May He destroy for ever the Rakshasha's power to cast illusion at the Holy Cave!

We hear that a Divine Man is in the valley. The Master has taken His "three steps to one."

TEMPLE OF THE SUN, SRINAGAR.

Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.

PSALM LXVIII, 13.

April 13th. Srinagar. Had to start in pitch darkness, breaking all rules of road, on account of H.E. Arrived, peeved and disgruntled, to be suddenly confronted by literally the most magnificent view in the world. It presents a greater combination of beauties than aught other. It makes it sinful to be unhappy here. That exquisite view, for diversity and delicacy, is unequalled in the world.

First, at the garden gate, the Jhelum winding in shawl pattern. On this, my houseboat rocks, *Nautilus* by name, suggesting fairy voyages *à la* Ouida. Maji log bring sheaves of purple iris for my "dead." Across is a bright jade island, cut also in cones with even brighter yellow of mustard flowers. These have drifts of pink peach- and white pear-blossom lace. All is ringed with poplar colonnades in tenderest spring green, through which flits a big, white, fluffy cockatoo. And beyond is the royal-blue velvet and sparkling diamonds of Himavat's mightiest peaks. A sight to draw Krishna's flute. The delicacy of a Watteau, the profundity of the Black Rock. Behind this daintiest of paintings rises the rocky hill of Shiv. All nature bows to the Mightiest. So, having painted her brightest and daintiest for Hari, for Mahadev she makes rough rocks dyed in His sacred ochre, jagged paths like His serpents, climbing to the austere Temple above.

This in the evening, gilded by the sunrays, turns orange, and so do the planes at the base. A wonderful study in mystic, misty gold, relieved by the pear blossoms' snowy

drifts, white as the sari of a widow yogini. And ever the shikaras gliding, sliding, slipping, dipping into the mystic Thibetan country.

Drove through a suburb. Purple flowers smouldering below a blanched wall, trees that scent the air with an aching sweetness. It is the sunset hour. A dying glare photographs the red clay roofs in vivid tiles upon the greenery, and white houses, bright with reflected light, glimmer in compounds overgrown with tropical plants. In the middle of the road walks a bird-seller, with bamboo cages, swinging from a bamboo pole, and a white cockatoo balancing from his shoulder. Was it our cockatoo of the morning ?

About Thibet there is an amusing story. A Californian recently arrived at Kashi and begged to be shown the Ramakrishna Mission. We went and found an excellent operating theatre of all modernity. The swamis go out to the ghats and streets, find the maimed, halt and dying, and compel them to come in. The ministering angels are American millionairesses, persuaded by the eloquence of missionary monks in the U.S.A. My friend having arrived from the Far West, " to join his order," arrangements were immediately made to pass him on to Thibet. From the railway a hundred miles' ride to the monastery. From the Hermitage ninety miles more to the Master. He, dressed in orange silks, is fed, like St. Benedict, from a basket. None dare approach him. He has, in fact, all the pomp of

the Pope at Rome! And the real Master wears a Rajput cotton jacket and comes to the bedside of his devotees!

Floating on the Jhelum's sweet waters of Asia, I have offered purple and white iris and mauve pungent thyme to my "dead." The real tragedy of life lies in the love we have not given, the opportunities for achievement we have missed.

THE MYSTERY OF THE CAVE

At last we drew into our station. Crowds of people thronged it inside and out. They were sitting everywhere, on the hard ground, in clusters and circles, under the bright moonlight. Their bundles and brass cooking-pots beside them. A little apart, Jack and I gazed silently at the scene. The shadows of the roofs fell sharply on the white fairness of the earth. There was a dense blackness in the shade of the mud walls, beyond them stretched a cactus hedge. Polished, it shone like blades of steel in that blue and white brightness. We seemed to be standing in a great silence —a silence so great that the bubbly chatter of the people scarcely disturbed it. All sound and all colour were quieted and chastened by the moonlight. While I was looking I had an experience which I had had once or twice before in my life. That which seemed at one moment a chaos, a shifting kaleidoscope, with no design, fell suddenly into perfect order, all its bits slipping into place. A new world opened out. A vast calm settled on the scene, on us, on life. "It is all one," I said to myself. "The plan, how clear! and how deep the unity, how full of peace!"

There was no moon, but the stars were blazing, and by their light the snows were faintly seen. "That other life!" I thought, "the life of search and prayer." Brushing against my face was a full and perfect rose. Cream-coloured, it gleamed like a pearl in the still, enchanted night. All radiance and earthly loveliness seemed to lie folded in those lustrous petals. The rose at least was at peace within itself. "Dear, lovely life," I cried out, "can Yogis find anything more precious than this after all?"—FLOWERS AND ELEPHANTS.

Where the kingfisher flaunts
His garb of azure sheen,
And meadow-sweet and nodding buttercups
Do dream and sleep
Hard by a crystal stream
That doth no vigil keep.

As I entered the Dahl Gate, a vaporous green silence enclosed me. Dew, like crystal rain, shimmered in the amazing greenness and flung a million diamonds at the sun. A double row of chenars guarded the approach to that

empire of vegetation, admitting me into a jungle of every green. Through interstices in the branches, as intricately designed as a cathedral window, the sunlight fell in shafts. The effect was bewildering. My vision quivered, grew uncertain, and the trees seemed to dissolve into a tremulous green mist. I moved through wavering tunnels of leaves and beside a lake that flung an incredible glare at the sky. Orioles and kingfishers flashed. Seen between hanging branches, over tiny islands of silver and gold, and curling lotus leaves, on the hill above was a Thibetan Gompa.

I seemed lost in ocean-green twilight. Mailed dragon-flies flashed up from exotic tangles and other insects lay drunk on the leaves of lotus and pink-tipped chalices.

The air was deadly sweet, hot and still as the depths of the sea. A faint rasp, a buzz, the lisp of leaves were the only sounds. But for the apparent cultivation of the floating gardens, famous as the Babylonian hanging parterres, I might have been rowed in some primeval forest, where giant lizards and other animals were likely to spring up suddenly and destroy this stupendous silence.

Hidden in reaches of luminous green were alleys of little streams. There was a satisfying restlessness in the dim cool water. It immersed the vision in an imaginary moisture that seemed actual to the throat. Strange patterns of leaves, tapestries of plants and blooming trees, traced themselves in the transparent haze, uncertain, deceptive. The water lanes

breathed fragrances that were voluptuous and unhealthy. They glided into groves of willow, under arching bridges of Moghul days, and through palisades of walnut.

One of these lanes led us to a green island of shade. I sat wrapped in delicious coolness. The exotic quiet was a womb of fancies. It set me to dreaming. Surely there was no solitude, no quiet to be obtained on this noisy, over-peopled earth like that of a Kashmiri houseboat once it had escaped the civilization of Srinagar and been towed into a side water-alley, lost in such a green abyss as this, or let loose on the watery waste of the Wular! No one could possibly find nor overtake it. How many couples, since the pale faces came across the seas, have found each other's innermost hearts in Kashmiri quietude! How many children seeking an incarnation, hitherto denied, have been reborn in these ideal conditions!

May 22nd. The Jhelum Lady, with face and arms a real brown, not done by Marcel, went to Nishat Bagh *endimanchée*. Fountains, floral and festal gaiety a replica of Versailles. The only difference the ring of snows round.

May 25th. Madame Gildemeester,* who works with entire devotion in the T.S., even hewing her own wood and drawing her own water, told me that she went to Amarnath. At the moment of anointing her eyes by the priest, in the Cave, with the sacred clay, she saw the vision of an ascetic

* She has since died, as she had lived, a Sikh, and was carried by them to her rest in the iris groves.

sitting in the Cave. I told her it was the Great Lord of Yoga Himself that she had seen.

As I drove home, we passed the hill of the Takht. This fluted fane is like a mirror because a Temple of Shiv, the Self-Revealing. For some days of a rich ochre only, it had appeared naught but dull, dun stonework. This evening, lit and framed by the horse-chestnut's white, waxy candelabra, the yellow ochre slithers seemed alive with the Great Lord's vitality.

Next day, after lunch, I found the pundit arrived and seated in my boat, to arrange the details of our orthodox pilgrimage to Amarnath. No meat *en route* and no leather in the Cave. Must take rubbers as well as riding-hat.

Srinagar. June 7th. Eve of departure for Amarnath. Lunched with the loveliest woman in the world in her house-boat. Paris bonbons and perfumed cigarettes on the Jhelum. She floats in Persian attire, which captivated imperial Boris in La Ville Lumière.* Her husband in such faultless Bond Street togs, it is difficult to think he spends his time in trying to get us out.

Returning in the gloaming, the Holy River in which sixteen dips are necessary for a strictly orthodox Amarnath, is lighted for miles with the rosy glow of the conqueror's house-boats. Behind glimmer wanly the mighty, mystic Himalayan peaks.

June 8th. Drive of miles through Srinagar slums. But

* She has since died from drugging, contracted in the West.

we pass the great Mosque with Chinese spires favouring Bow Church, built by that woman of many parts, the Light of the World. Also the iris graveyards, all along the route, strike a cheery note through the squalor. My companion, also Irish, belongs to the Order of Service, which forbids private means. Though a brilliant pianiste, she may not earn for self. We eat only dahl and rice. Armanath seems auspicious. Gunderbal, the gate of Thibet, the same as before. The three perfect arches left of the Moghul Bridge, a little more crumbly against the velvet chenars, the line of the houseboats a little longer, the grey-green willows, symbolical of their regrets for fair, far Ferghana, as droopy, the Sind Valley, hidden beneath the snows, as mysterious as ever; all else as ever was and ever shall be. Our tent pitched on a turfy terrace once trod by royal feet, made by the most gorgeous dynasty the world has ever seen, and surrounded by the kingly chenars they planted. My companion, who is psychic, says she can sense the Moghul Court still there and hear the swish of the shimmering skirts of queens.

June 9th. Left for Kungal, the first stage of the route. The vines drop wild grapes from the chenars. Jessamine mixes with the torrents of Chinese white roses. It is, on the lower levels, the pink and white season for flowers. Roses, grading from white to crimson, are on the same briar. Convolvuli, delicately striated in blush and cream, star the earth. Vetch stains crimson the Sind river rushing

roaring from the glaciers above. Port wine "mulgoods" refresh our parched throats on ambling ponies. We are overtaken by two Chinese on fastest steeds bound for Yarkand. Grinning from ear to ear, we long to ask them *re* life in their gay capital. Alas, their steeds, laden with rose and purple "ruffle pushminas" from Srinagar, don't stay for all the "Chin Chin Chinaman" of our song.

Arriving at Kangan, we find it full of a Wild West show of weird Yankees, with the "missionary face," from Leh. From our tent, above the roaring river, we see in front the hoary Himalayas. One nullah leads to a great snowfield. Across it is a horizontal black bar. The khansamah says it is a bridge for bakri wallahs* where one thought no human foot could climb. This was blotted out at night by one of those mighty Himalayan storms. The great guns rolled round the mighty peaks. Incessant electric flashes lit up our frail tent perched above the torrent, now an incandescent rush. The Great God is riding upon the storm. Mahadev has met us more than half way.

June 10th. As through air cleared by the storm, the Divine Music of the Great God's Temple, on waking, was more distinct than since our start amidst yelling coolies and scrambling pice wallahs. Reversing the process of Tannhäuser, as we approach the Cave through the rarefied air—we are now at six thousand feet—the music becomes louder,

* Goat tenders.

earthly sounds die down. Ours is a musical cavalcade, and to-day we sing "Anitra's Dance on Wings of Song."

We are at the meeting of the Empires, so Kashmir is a vast nursery garden of the fruits and flowers of the world. Nearly all are indigenous here. We pass wild apples, pears, cherries, apricots and "mulgoods." And everywhere cascades of roses in the whole gamut of pinks. We slept in a grove of walnuts. The Real Thibet is met in a group of Thibetans, in conical furry caps and pigtails, offering turquoise. They are plain but jolly, unlike the fanatical Mohammedans. We were in despair because no bath-tub appeared. But our khansamah pulled a skin from his pocket and stretched it over poles to make a huge saucer, from which we rise aphrodites on alternate days. We offered him porridge, which he indignantly refused, saying he was a pir or padre!

The rushing river is sea-green and foaming white. The towering precipice on the right is covered with deodars. The left is almost bare, due to the whirlwinds from the plateaux of Thibet.

Owing to the rain, we are now in a cotton-wool world. Shut in by mists. Only one pure snowy peak rising above the clouds, as a woman's purity pierces the world's calumnies.

June 11th. In lovely sunshine we left Gund. Still avalanches of roses, the brightest cerise ever seen, to cheer us for the avalanches of snow later. We are overtaken by the two gentlemen of Yarkand, grinning till their slits

disappear and shouting "Shabash!" Our lunch is on a camping ground on which are great slabs of rock-tables; for pungent perfume, powders of dry flowers falling from above. There are fields of white lily-spikes with ochre hearts and vermilion stamens. There are wild horse-chestnuts, cedars, and the pale little primula, mother of the gorgeous varieties of the West. Also waxy daphne and red arbutus. The gigantic cliffs rise one thousand feet straight out of the river, backed by snows of sixteen thousand feet. The castellated rocks are as though slabbed by a giant brush, sometimes spired with deodars like the gargoyles of Notre-Dame. The avalanches bring down green moraines, sown with London pride, which make a green foaming river. The ravine becomes wilder and wilder. The snows are sometimes softer than swan's-down, promising infinite rest, sometimes in tiers of terrible ice terraces threatening destruction.

One thinks of the immense length of the Manvantara, in which the river, formed from glaciers, has worn its way down the mighty gorge, and our song of to-day is

"Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!"

Now we pass a green island with waving feathery, pink flowers. Moment of moments! We are actually on the great glacier which has come down the mountain from the *other* side, and chocked up the valley! The Sind has cut its way through the centre, leaving bevelled edges and arches

in the snow. We dismount and are dragged along perilous paths of snow for two miles, then cross another bridge, mount a hill, and, disillusioning moment! there is Sonamarg! I had imagined a gay parterre of tents set in gorgeous natural gardens of blooming flowers. Behold, a few huts and three tents, only a sparse scattering of iris, a few forget-me-nots and white ranunculi.

There was a frowning influence as though the guardians of Holy Places did not wish us to enter. Here our bhisti suddenly died.

But there are five separate snow mountains round, each with its own glacier.

June 12th. A brighter world. On the marg appears the dwarf purple velvet iris characteristic of our nine thousand feet. All altitude plants are dwarfed, with richer colours. So the pale lanky iris of the valley becomes the dwarfed, rich bloom of the mountain. Also, the old green lilies of long-ago Gungabal days reappear here. Synonymous with evil, they are green as jealousy outside and thickly spotted with black within, and the green stamens are claw-like and grasping. Then there are yellow and white candytufts and real violets (usually yellow on heights) hiding behind stones. Our objective is the sahibs' camp for information *re* Amarnath. Two fishermen meet us, say the season is a month late, and try to scare us off. All passes into the Lidar are blocked for the present. Three mission ladies advise us to try, as June is *not* a lovely month here. Four

friends have just returned thence to Srinagar, and though one had a *crise de nerfs* after the dangerous snow bridges, still they *did*. It appears that the melting snow may at any step precipitate one into a chasm of death. My companion senses the sinister, forbidding influences here, but has been having reassuring visions from Mahadev all along the route. First His eagles, then His snakes, have appeared at meditation. She holds that it is our karma. We shall succeed. In any case it is our duty to try, and for me, for many years, in many lands, I have felt that Holy Cave would place the Flower of Forgiveness in my hands, could I reach it. Now, at the portals I will not fail. Already, from the thunderstorm night guidance came in the morning. The cuckoo answers reassuringly from the glacier as I write.

Amarnath is holy because it contains a self-formed Lingam of Shiv which miraculously waxes and wanes with the moon. It has been held holy for three thousand years as, under King Nara, who lived 1048–1000 B.C., it was visited by pilgrims. Nay, more, before the dawn of history it was so. Old Srinagar, like Is, is now buried beneath the waters of the Wular Lake. Often have the boatmen heard the groans of the damned there and seen the bubbles of their sighs. But when Sandimatnagar was a living town the pilgrims of Amarnath used to pass that way.

We had barely returned to our tent when the rain fell in torrents. Impossible to move. So we sent for the friendly postmaster, our neighbour. He comes wrapped in

a Thibetan rug, and his cap is a brown fur Thibetan, like that worn by Master K. H. in the photograph known to all chelas and aspirants. He is passing rich on R.55, and seven people to keep. He regales us with Boccaccian tales of these.

June 13th. Left in sunshine. Five radiant peaks after rain. We feel the influence of the spirits of the summits. The same as that of a certain fully magnetized lingam in a certain ashram in the plains. These mighty peaks on each side above us are all magnetized by the presence of the Great Lord of Yog presiding at Amarnath, pure, sweet, exalted, brought there by the prayers of millions of pilgrims in three thousand years.

All earthly cares die down. With this is an assurance of guidance and the intensified conviction that, as with all widows, salvation lies in devotion to a ghost.

The way becomes still wilder and more interesting. Now appears the edelweiss, world-wide emblem of purity. It is, however, grey-green, forming a fine contrast, in fields, with the bright orange candytuft. The primula is now orange too, and also deep purple. There is columbine foliage, but the time of flowers is not yet. Notwithstanding the late season, the ubiquitous cuckoo follows us all along the route. We enter the glade of Baltal, and are amazed to find it fertile, flowery, smiling. The scenery is poetic and idyllic. There are fragile, elegant, pale-green and white copses of birch-trees in new foliage, mingled with black firs and pines. Some

of these are charred by lightning, making grotesque Japanese effects. The camp-ground is a saucer set high above the river. Shelley wrote:

> Would he and I were far away
> Keeping flocks in Himalay.

We met here a flock of at least five thousand sheep, an ocean of moving, bleating dams, rams and lambs.

The sweet, keen influence of the Lord pours down from the snowy peak of Amarnath. I had seen it twice before, far away in the dusty plains, by the third eye of Mahadev. I recognized the trees and white peak above. We hear, too, that a party of thirteen, including old women, have just done the trip to the Cave and back in one day. There is no cause for fear. The Lord is indeed our shepherd. We lie down to-night in His green pastures.

June 14th. Rain is falling in torrents. The two-roomed rest-house is occupied partly by three Americans, two pretty girl doctors and friend. They are doing invaluable work in a frontier hospital, under an armed guard. One-third of their patients are for sterility, the bugbear of Eastern women. The other room is occupied by a handsome forest officer with a young wife with a wild-rose face. Under the rule of the road, we may all crowd in together, male and female respectively, into the two rooms, but we have not the heart to disturb any of these good people and our tent remains up. Presently the wild rose calls and says her man will sleep on the verandah if we like to share her room. Again

we refuse on plea of blankets and hot bottles, but oh! that night! The rain descended, the floods fell, no wraps nor bottles could keep the ten-thousand-feet cold out. Our bodies were at once warm on the surface, yet chilled to the marrow, so that we shivered and chattered all night.

June 15th. Thank God for sunshine and the wild rose's room. On going out, in addition to the flowers already seen we remark in addition to those already enumerated:

Red clarkias,
A lily like a Christmas rose,
Spiraea,
Polyanthus,
Buttercups (no daisies),
Myosotis,
Eschscholtzia,
Primulas, now crimson and violet.

Most remarkable is a small garden of iris in all shades of blue and red, purple and white, with fairy spires of white candy-tuft interspersed. Nature is as artistic as the gardeners of Hyde Park. She arranges fields of orange scabious with blue myosotis, purple iris with edelweiss; violets always behind a stone for warmth, not modesty, and white stars of strawberries.

These all grow on the edge of the marg opposite to the clairvoyant's peak. This presumably because there are no trees just there, and all sun-glints rest on it. The river rushes between.

It is now the eve of the Great Day, the moon is full. We

have bathed in the saucer and changed our linen. Our feet are girded with chaplies, our passover of vegetables has been eaten, our alpenstocks are ready, we start at 4 a.m.

The spiritual magnetism has collected round the famous cave of Amarnath through the August pilgrimage undertaken by thousands of India's pilgrims for, as historically known, over three thousand years. It is a cave one hundred and fifty feet wide and high, at an altitude of thirteen thousand feet in the great Himalayan Range.

The presence within it of a stalactite, which has taken the form of a lingam in pure white ice, forms the magnet which attracts the followers of the Great God Shiv to this snow-clad mountain. One of its special peculiarities is that the lingam waxes and wanes with the moon, consequently full-moon day is the Day of Be With Us here.

A rainbow forms a sash across a black hillside. Surely a promise of help for our pilgrimage!

Of Amarnath little may be said. It was at once too terrible and too blessed. I can understand why an American girl was carried back by her guides in agonies of tears. We started at 4 a.m. The moon was to the left of the great snow-peak exactly as I had twice seen it, at short intervals, clairvoyantly in Kashi, on waking, many months before. We passed a second and greater lawn of iris. We sank to the river-bed, and, for a mile, the ponies could hug the base of the cliffs. Then the gorge became filled with the river jutting out beneath the glacier, and the only path was on the great glaciers through which it had cut its way as with a steely knife. As June is the melting month, our passage was like that of Eliza on the ice-floes of the Ohio. We took eight men with us. Two of these were detailed to cut steps in the snow before us. A false step meant death. It was the utter concentration required that was our salvation. One could hardly realize the awful danger.

We turn sharp to the left and ascend straight up the bed of the river for five miles, either on the glacier itself or where the glacier is breaking. When we cannot cross the crevasses we pass to the left, on the sheer side of the

mountain, where steps have to be cut into the soft clay or shingle. This part was the most dangerous and frightening because the clay stepped on by one person threatened all to slide down when trod by the next. The same with large stones. There was nothing to grasp except the man in front and behind. There were seven or eight of these lengthy spurs, always in parts when a drop would have meant the river-bed, seen at these places because the snow bridge had broken.

Looking behind, at the end of the glacier rose a very beautiful mountain, Harbhagawan, on which the sun shone brilliantly later. It showed its top as a fluted concave exactly of the shape of a fan shell. A most thrilling sight in the dawn sunrise. On the right, the mountain wall of stone rose to piercing thin stone peaks, as if to make holes in the bright blue sky. It was very impressive and vivid.

The first two miles of glacier were not too difficult, and at 6.40 a.m. it was still not too cold. The coolies picked up wood on the way, the glacier being strewn at these points with stones and branches. The mountain opposite the cave is very impressive with vertical ribs of limestone. Not a blade of grass.

This wall of enormous impregnability, with glacier at foot, was a resting-place for one small red-breast chirping cheerily. The great and the small! Where the glacier broke it was thrilling to see the Sind river leaping green over great boulders, a giant waterfall. After two miles of

the glacier, preparations were made for danger. Ropes were taken out and axes got ready for the clay side of the cliff. "The gods play hockey with boulders as balls." When I looked back at Harbhagawan, I felt prayers being directed towards me. Despite the danger, I felt a calm peace; although the shingles ran down beneath me. At last, at 8 a.m., after five miles of this, we entered the Amarnath Nullah. The rich purples and yellows of the cliffs give place to grassy plateau. During the rest, I remarked that there were bright yellow ranunculi, the sacred colour appropriate to the Lord's Sacred Hill. Also we picked up a bear's tail and saw marmots who uttered shrill cries round the hill. Then the last ascent of two miles took place. We passed up the Nullah to the left of Amarnath Cave; the last path was very stiff. I was hauled along by three guides, their shawls forming a loop for one hand. The Pir led me by the other. At the last terrible pull, I became suddenly aware that the great peaks of ice round had become the petals of the World's Chakram Lotus! and were in whirling force!

When the "influence" came I felt walking in double consciousness. Above was the Great White Lotus of the World, swirling, its outer petals being the snowy peaks. I felt the Master looking through the Pir's eyes. He comes from Cabul, and being a Pir, may not marry. What had been a joke before, because of his facial resemblance, now became reality as he removed my boots at the cave. I first

noticed this change at the dangerous parts of the route, e.g. that he had the eyes of K. H. and the expression and movements of M.

This whirling, swirling world, guarded by avalanches and angels, amid snow-drifts and snow-storms, hidden by mighty mountains, concealed by ice and glacier, purer than purity itself, sweeter than dreams, chillier than icicles, keener than electricity, made the life of the valleys vague and unreal.

Just before reaching the cave we had to get through a hole in the rocks. It was very low and it was a struggle to get through. I sank to the knees in snow and was pulled out by the Pir. After the hole the pilgrims' path in the summer joins ours, with a little bridge over the stream now frozen.

Here is an account of it by an eye witness :

" The procession of several thousands of pilgrims to the far-away Cave of Amarnath, nestled in a glacial gorge of the Western Himalayas, through some of the most charming scenery in the world, is fascinating in the extreme. It strikes one with wonderment to observe the quiet and orderly way in which a canvas town springs up in some valley with incredible rapidity at each halting-place, with its tents of various colours and of all shapes and sizes, with its bazaars, and broad street running through the middle, and all vanishing as quickly at the break of dawn, when the whole army of gay pilgrims are on the march once more for the day. Then again, the glow of countless

cooking-fires, the ashen-clad Sadhus under the canopy of their large geru umbrellas pitched in the ground, sitting and discussing or meditating before their dhunis, the Sannyasins of all orders in their various garbs, the men and women with children from all parts of the country in their characteristic costumes, and their devout faces, the torches shimmering at nightfall, the blowing of conch-shells and horns, the singing of hymns and prayers in chorus—all these and many other romantic sights and experiences of a pilgrimage, which can be met with nowhere else outside of India, are the most impressive, and convey, to some extent, an idea of the overmastering passion of the race for religion. Of the psychological aspect and significance of such pilgrimages, done on foot for days and days, much could be written. Suffice it to say, that it is one of those ancient institutions which have, above all, kept the fire of spirituality burning in the hearts of the people. One sees here the very soul of the Hindu nation laid bare in all its innate beauty and sweetness of faith and devotion.

Passing Bawan, noted for its holy springs, and Eishmuqam, and Ganeshbal, the pilgrims reached Pahalgam, the village of the shepherds, and encamped at the foot of an arrow-shaped ravine beside the roaring torrents of the Lidar. Here they made a halt for a day to observe the Ekadashi fast. Coming near Chandanwara, the next stage, they had to do on foot the first glacier, which proved to be a tremendous climb of several thousand feet. Extremely

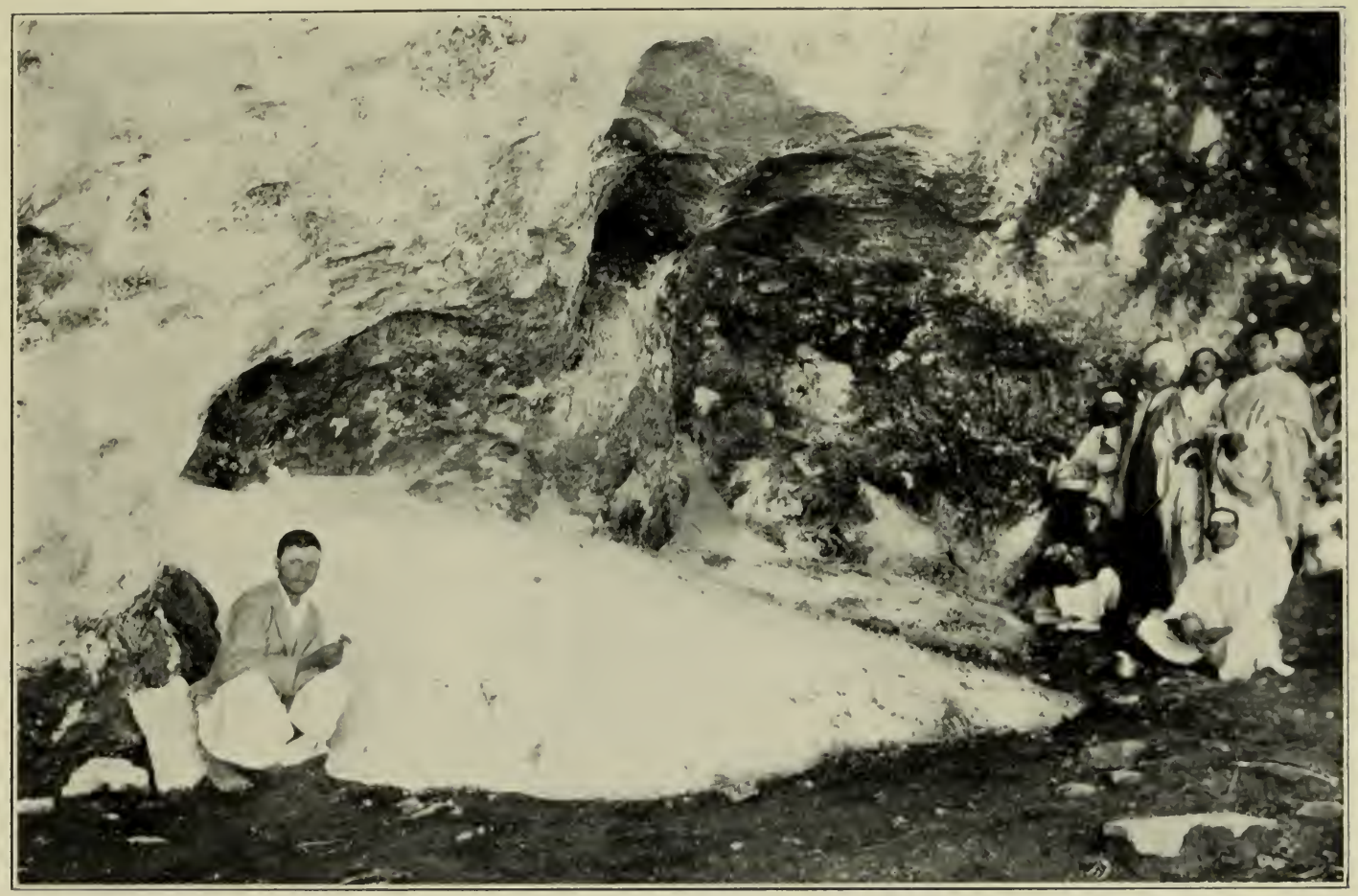
exhausted with making another steep climb, and finally scrambling up and down along irregular goat-paths at the edge of precipitous slopes they pitched their tents at a place amongst the snow-peaks, at an altitude of 18,000 feet, much higher than the glacier itself. The whole of the following morning was a steady climb over the Pish-Bal hill till at last the source of the Lidar, Shishram Nag, lay five hundred feet below, hushed in its icy cradle. Next day, crossing frost-bound peaks and glaciers over the Maha Gunas mountain, the procession came down to Panchatarani, the place of the five streams. In each of these the pilgrims were required to make ablutions, passing from one stream to another in wet clothes, in spite of the intense cold.

On the 2nd of August, the day of Amarnath itself, the pilgrims, after making a steep climb over the Rattan Pantsal and Bhairau Bal mountains and then a precipitous descent down the deep valley (after passing through the narrow hole of the Gharba Yatra on the razor-backed ridge), in which one false step would mean instant death, reached a flowing stream (Amravati). In this they had to bathe and smear their bodies with clay-marl from the bed before entering the sacred precincts of the Cave after another stiff ascent. They then reached the great Cave, in a very passion of the Shiv consciousness, the whole frame of many shaking with emotion. The Cave itself was 'large enough to hold a cathedral, and the great Ice-Shiv, in a niche of deepest shadow, seemed as if throned on its own base.' Then, their

bodies purified and whitened with the chalky silt, their faces aflame with supreme devotion to Shiv, they entered the shrine itself, nude, except for a loin-cloth; and kneeling in adoration, they bowed low before the Lord. The awesome majesty of the whole atmosphere, with the song of praise from a hundred throats resounding in the Cave, and the shining purity of the great Ice-Lingam, overpowered all.

Here there was all worship. 'I can well imagine,' Swami Vivekananda has said after visiting the pilgrimage, 'how this cave was first discovered. A party of shepherds, one summer day, must have lost their flocks and wandered in here in search of them. What must have been their feeling as they found themselves unexpectedly before this unmelting Ice-Lingam, white like camphor, with the vault itself dripping offerings of water over it for centuries unseen of mortal eyes. Then when they came home they whispered to the other shepherds in the valleys how they had suddenly come upon Mahadev.'"

In approach, the mouth of the cave looked small, but on actually reaching it, the size impressive. The arch is one hundred and fifty feet high, the width ditto. Three white ice-lingams are at the top of the inner end of the cave against the wall. To the right, a broad small one with three peaks like a tiara is Parvati, the female aspect of Shiv. The middle, perfectly formed lingam, has its back to the wall. There are no droppings from above. The third



THE HOLY CAVE OF AMARNATH.

half-formed, like a mound, of the same white ice. Each on its own ice pedestal of about three feet radius.

It was disappointing to find the cave uncared for, full of goats' droppings. But I saw immediately the divine forms of devas, white, transparent like icicles, standing all round it. Then, at the back wall of the cave, the Lingam. It is only two and a half feet high, of clear white ice, standing on a platform of the same. But it drew me with an irresistible force.

I wanted to sleep in trance beside it. Never wake again. With an effort I recalled the claims of the lower life and of those I had left behind me there. I placed my wild flowers on the pillar, on which there were others placed by the Americans. No others had visited the cave. Even they had been compelled by its resistless force. Then I asked two questions for guidance for my two friends; each was immediately answered.

All around in tremendous rhythm from the snowy mountains came

> "Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!
> God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!"

I saw Mahadev as the Dancing Shiv, no longer the austere ascetic, but as inaugurating a new era of art and beauty, colour, sound, and perspective. With new work to be done in this direction.

We left the cave sobbing with humility at the peace and power of the Great God.

How the return journey was accomplished I shall never know. My snow-boots were pulled off by the servants on the verandah. My friend put me bodily into a hot bath and bed. But in my bed, with undiminished force and fervour, I heard pealing from my pillow

"Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!"

THE MYSTERY FROM BEYOND THE ZOGI LA

After this preliminary purification, next day came the reward. I had an intimation to proceed to the Zogi La Pass, the gateway to the Mysteries of Thibet, and to go alone!

I left Baltal on a pony. The lovely glade had never looked so fair, as we climbed the mountain path. There were yellow violets and also clusters of scarlet bignonia leaves coloured by the snow. The higher we go the richer the purple of the primula, the more shining the silvery birches, the more resonant the cuckoo's note re-echoed from the hills, the more musical the swishes of the mighty avalanches to the depths below. And, all along, it was "Hark! Hark! the lark!" At one point the pony had to be sent ahead, as the two men leading it were required to haul me over the terrible avalanches blocking the path. One false step meant certain death. We hurried over. It was a case of fire to right and left of us, from the danger of boulders from above as well as the loosening snow beneath. The path is so narrow above the precipice, only one person or pony can pass at a time.

Still, of what overpowering interest this so-called High Road to Thibet! What Great Ones have trodden it!

One sees them. Maurya, the superb horseman, must needs have dismounted here. Koot Houmi, the gentlest, raised his fur cap for a breathing space. Hilarion shivered at the keen winds *en route* from Cyprus, his balmy home of the body. The last word in modern thought has come down this tiny path. And, as we reached the summit, the torrent of rain we had been wading through stopped. The two syces called out, "Zogi La hogya, mem Sahib!"

The upper avalanches from the virgin snow-fields above were roaring like thunder or lions.

At that very moment, the sun burst through the clouds, enabling me to take the photographs at the exact psychological moment, impossible before.

And—and—and! I had barely finished the photographs, as I thought, when the dak wallah approached bearing dispatches from far-off Thibet!

What import these dispatches had for me, and where I went, and what I did, on the *other side* of the Zogi La Pass honour forbids me to say.

The Return

Left Baltal in sunshine. We met our U.S.A. friend who had left us for bears while we sought Shiv. He had failed in his quest of the lower life. His snowy nullah had brought forth no bruins and he is following us now. We met many Thibetans and Ladakis. Nearing Sonamag

the rain descended, the winds blew, and we sensed again the same sinister influence as before.

Now we are housed in one of the two rooms conserved for Sahib Log in the Serai. The rest is occupied by Thibetans, etc., of the roughest sort. We have just had one into our tiny room. We wished to buy his necklace of turquoise (feroze), and cat's-eyes, and red stones, but he refused to sell. This is the last rough stage of our journey. The rest in comparatively luxurious daks. Never have I appreciated four walls and burning logs before as after the horror of the tent. How one should pity the homeless.

Amarnath has done this for us! Its merits are such that all sin is left there on those gypsum cliffs. We have found the Flower of Forgiveness. Therefore we start afresh, renewed, *to commence life again!*

The postmaster has one of the saddest, sweetest voices I have ever heard. He is a past pupil of Tyndale Biscoe, C.M.S. Nevertheless he vouched for the following, which only took place two weeks ago. The nice, clean, brahman boy we saw in the village shop suddenly went mad. He threw a pot at his friend, assaulted a chokidar, and rushed up the marg. Two chokidars ran in hot pursuit, threw him down, and sat upon him. This was opposite the post office. Four Kashmiri pundits inside, hearing the row, rushed out and found him unconscious. They carried him back to the shop. Artificial respiration was no good. Then the police sergeant, a devout Hindu, said mantras at

the possessed boy. Then a voice out of the boy said, "I will not leave him." "Who are you?" they asked. "I am Ananda Deva. He killed a sheep while I was doing puja on the hill."

"He never touched the sheep." "No, but he commanded others to do it." They knew this was true. They continued the mantras. "I will leave him," said the incensed deva, "if he abstains from meat during the eighth day of each fortnight." The Hindus divide the month into light and dark fortnights. "Where do you live?" they asked. "In the jungle behind the camping ground," he said. Since then the boy has been his calm, usual self, But after that, all the Hindu community of the village. including the postmaster, made a pilgrimage to the base of Ananda Deva's hill, offered him food, and did worship to him. The boy has kept his promise.

The ice-bevelled edges of the glaciers are just like giant crocodiles on the stream. The woodpeckers have red waistcoats. The honeysuckles are trees—not creepers. The butterflies are black and yellow as we continue the descent. At a last look at the terrible peaks above, we see a pillar pointing to two smaller ones against the sky-line. Our P.O. friend told us to look out for these. A man and his wife, having climbed to this awful height, prayed never to return, as one wishes never to leave the Lingam of Amarnath Cave. By Yog their prayer was answered. They were turned into pillars of stone in the earth life.

We have now reached the heart of the rose country and are encamped at Gund. As we pass up the village street looking for Ladaki spoons and turquoise, a great peace descends on the soul through the balmy air, after those terrible blasts above. We have atoned.

We start anew. Our subconscious selves are singing :

> Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
> Grace to cover *all* our sin !

Coming down, we met on a grassy lawn under a walnut tree two gentlemen returning to Thibet. They were all packed up ready to resume treks. Said they were late. Impatient to start. With great difficulty I persuaded one to pose for the camera. We had only just time to see the Buddhist Bible in an embroidered cloth strapped on to his back. That Bible that Kawaguchi came from Japan and suffered much to get from Thibet. We bought a chased spoon from their servant. Impossible to get them to part with their treasures.

Our last march was through a white country of drifts of white roses and jessamine, and drafts of their scents, symbolical of the purity, sweetness, and newness of life we had won at Amarnath.

THE MYSTERY OF REINCARNATION

TWO

Two souls met in the windy spaces of the sky.
" Brother, show me the way to heaven,
I died last night with the moon."
" Sister, show me the way to earth,
To-morrow I am to be born."

THE child's photograph of the frontispiece is the most striking external proof of reincarnation extant. It was taken by an amateur who was in the dark as to the previous incarnation of its subject. Only three copies exist; of these, one was given by Mrs. Besant to the late Mrs. Mead.* All my tact and patience with Mr. G. R. S. Mead failed to get it. Mrs. Mead told me, shortly before her passing, that Mrs. Besant told her the Master Maurya had called in the flesh at the house in the Himalayas where she was staying with the child's family. This is one of the few appearances of the Master in the flesh since H. P. B.'s passing. It has never before been published.

The second copy was in the possession of the child's mother, the third in that of her grandfather. To get it, I had to travel, rising at 5.30 a.m. from a comfortable hotel, and go to a remote part of Bengal by a train crawling forty miles in four and a half hours. With infinite tact and patience I disinterred it from a vast lumber the owner, on

* *Née* Laura Cooper, who had loved the original in her previous birth.

his return to the deserted bungalow, had rescued from the white ants who, in twenty years of neglect, had built mounds as high as a man on the verandah and were overrunning the place. Their marks were in the photograph album. Thank God they spared this !

The owner said: "We left two old servants in charge of the house, which was tenantless for twenty years. The white ants had built up all the verandah and were streaming from the roof. They had eaten all the furniture inside. When my first son was born, of the last of my three wives, my sister gave me the house, which was hers. She insisted on my marrying a third time to get my son, to carry on our house, and to perform the Shraddhas at my death."

He continued: "Colonel Olcott, Annie Besant and Constance Wachtmeister, Devindranath Tagore (not the poet) and Swami Vivekananda used to come here and sit in the further corner of the garden about the time of the photograph in 1899. My mother built a house there which has all been destroyed except the big foundations which you see, on which they sat. She then planted that peepul tree to mark the spot where they sat. The photographed baby's mother came down the river here from Kashi. 'Why do you come?' I asked. 'Because that corner calls me.' There was no other reason for her to come. She visits it at midnight, called, I believe, by the souls of the dead."

At the back of the house is a large banyan and mango grove. The Sibyl had arrived in her own house-boat from

Kashi the night before, after five days on the Holy Stream, for the forty miles, on which she spent the last night too. She had only arrived at the house that morning, but already an altar was erected in the heart of the grove. The Lingam, which had travelled on her neck, was now wrapped in a magenta silk. The sunlight filters down through the pale *pistache* of the mango and banyan leaves and gleams on the peacock's tail of an old brass puja lamp given her by a holy swami. On the paler yellow guavas, offered to the Lingam on the altar, and on the dark mysterious features and unfathomable eyes of Mysteriarcha herself. For the mysteries performed in this grove are the heart of Hinduism, second to none in India in occult power. Round her are her following, a man who had been stone-blind for ten years whom she restored to sight and who spends his days at her feet. Others who are said to come for baser motives, for she sells her jewels to give to any who need and takes the destitute into her own home. "When shall you return to Kashi?" I ask.

"When my mission is done," she replies.

"And that will be——?"

"Perhaps to-night, perhaps to-morrow night—I cannot tell."

"You are here to help the souls of the dead?"

"Yes."

"Which of those who sat in the corner is calling for your help? The Colonel, the Countess, the Sage, or the Swami?"

"None of these."

Nothing more can be extracted. A large part of her work is helping the earthbound disembodied. But about the time of the birth of the Babe, a whole family in inferno came crying to her, in torment, for help. There had been a lawless passion with an awful chain of results, an illegitimate birth. Shame had brought murder of the mother and babe. Murder had brought capital punishment. All three came calling in agony for help. Her great Master instructed her as to the *modus operandi*. The foremost woman of the age was then her disciple and was allowed to help. The latter explained their ceremonies to me, which consisted mainly in physical offerings. It is a part of the Law of the Universe that sacrifice must be made to atone for sin (*vide* the Dasaswamedh Ghat, where the gigantic Horse Sacrifice, in which royalties took even the menial part of scullions, was performed by a great prince six times over for his mother's sin). "I was allowed by the Great Ones to help her. The rites were performed in solitude, after which she returned to the family, rowing herself in a tiny boat."

The rites were successfully performed. She triumphed over death and hell. She prevailed over the gates of Hades. The family passed on to happier spheres.

The Babe's grandfather, who possessed this copy, is a suave and discreet man of the world. He was put in charge of his cousin, a young Maharajah, for King Edward's Coronation, exactly as the Babe's Master (in her former life)

accompanied Indian princes to England in '57. She saw him then in the flesh, when walking with her father in Hyde Park, and recognized him as "*Le Maître de mes Rêves.*"

A few notes about Mahatma Rankari Baba, a sage who lived near her, given by the Babe's uncle, will interest. He was born in 1840 in Jaunpur. At the age of nine he settled here as a beggar-boy. At first he lived under a peepul. Later on he lived in a huge bush near it. People built a house for him near it. He dug a tunnel underneath for Yog. He could cure sickness and foretell the future. He gave lofty teaching as though from a previous life. Thousands came to learn, including Vivekananda. Owing to the crowd, he shut himself in a house with high walls round. He was never seen for twenty years except on one occasion. Thieves had come to steal his golden utensils, and had left them in a bundle without taking them. He sent the things to them. At first he took milk only, then two chili pods a day, later only bael leaves, lastly nothing at all. He was known as the Master who lived on air, for seven years. He lifted the immense weight of a house of corrugated iron, for which cranes were built, phenomenally. He tried to save a rat from a cobra. It put out his eye, but he would not allow it to be killed. He said: "It is the Will of God." The uncle saw him one day outside feeding lepers. He was immensely tall. His hair fell to his feet, and was like a lion's mane. He was surrounded by an aureole of light in his latter days of no food, so that in the dark people could

always locate him. By Yog, without combustibles, he lighted a sacrificial fire and consumed his body. At the sight of the flames, people rushed in to save him. He signalled with smiles to let his mortal soil burn.

Next morning the rain fell in torrents for the first time this season. The one carriage refused to come. At last, four ekkas agreed to do so, to convey the sannyasini ladies of the house who had to return to Kashi for their religious duties, and their servants. They came, not for money, but because of the reputed sanctity of the Sibyl in the neighbourhood. We splashed through lakes of water for miles, the thunder, lightning and heavy rain crashing down through the flimsy cover of the country cart. The precious photograph was beneath the dirty rags of the ekka wallah to keep it from the damp. The station gained, the train was one hour late. A British sergeant, who shared the one waiting-room, sent for a fire-pot to dry my dripping stockings. As I sat, my feet wrapped in my mauve sleeping-jacket, I wondered whether the elements were raging at sacrilege in taking the photo, especially as the exposure brought on a severe illness. But I cannot think it aught but meritorious to give to a world depressed because of failure the most striking proof on the planet of *another chance*.

We arrived at Kashi, at the White House on the Gunga. Needless to say, it is a highly magnetized rendezvous of magicians, both white and black; during our absence the latter had been so rampant that the eldest son had been obliged

to fire on them with pistols. It was dangerous to go alone upon the roof.

On the balcony overlooking the Holy Stream, I was able to get some information from the subject of the photographs about her past life. She had, as I had previously heard from others, agreed to come back to earth to fulfil certain karmic debts. She was now in the lovely body of a brahmani of thirty. I had also heard, from two separate reliable sources, that in the intermediate life she had occupied the body of a snake in the precincts of the Hidden Temple. This was done by the Dark Forces, who ever check the onward path. Jesus, after his baptism, full of Mahadev, *was led by Him* to be tempted of the devil. An Arhat of our time was told by the Dark Forces that they would not impede his being a Jivanmukta if he would give up his work for the world. An offer at once declined. During the Babe's infancy, a wire arrived that she was ill. Her mother gazed into space and burst into tears. The Master was in the room, saying "X. will have to suffer because it is her last life." This has been fulfilled. Domestic troubles, continuous ill-health from chronic malady of the body have been her lot. But what matters that? She said: "I saw my past life as in a cinema. I saw what I was before."

K. T.—"And that?"

X.—"A white person."

K. T.—"Were you a man or a woman?"

X.—" A woman."

K. T.—" And her age ? "

X.—" She seemed to be about thirty-five."

K. T.—" And what sort of woman ? "

X.—" She seemed to be a literary person."

K. T.—" Can you tell me more about her ? It is so fascinating."

X.—" In a flash I saw this person, and knew it was myself in my past life. She was a thinker, she was sitting at a table covered with MSS. She was not English, some other European nationality."

K. T.—" Was she fat or thin ? "

X.—" She was plump, good-looking, fair. I could not see her eyes. I could see more, if I wished, by thinking about it. But what is the use of looking back ? One should go forward ! "

> As swans in bands
> Fly back to Gunga's well-remembered sands,
> So dawned upon the maiden's waking mind
> The far-off mem'ry of her life resigned.

In this particular case, the mem'ries returned at the age of twenty, e.g. the faculties earned, oh! how strenuously, developed at that age. Colonel Olcott, in tears, under the influence of Maurya, present unseen at the T.S. Convention, faltered, "That poor old woman, she sat at her desk!" He broke off in sobs.

X.—" When I wish, I can see the hidden temples. It came at twenty."

PART II

THE MYSTERY OF THE URN, TIME AND SPACE

Hedyle had said this, thought this every time she looked at herself, every time she lifted a polished mirror. "I've been here a long time. Only there is no time. I mean there isn't really. Plato and the peripatetics (though Socrates was an ill-informed monster) had some idea of the nonsense of it, of time's irrelevancy. That's why it doesn't matter." Nevertheless she added an additional grain of fresh kohl to the paste she had habitually affected. It doesn't do to appear haggard at assemblies. —HEDYLUS.

Flowers from the small inland pool, those scarce and rarely to be discovered water-lilies. Lilies (in his thought) were all about him. Purple, martagon twist of flame embroidery, tongue of citron-yellow, such lilies as Irene told him grew spotted like moth-wings in Arcadia, lilies of precious form and pattern, scroll-like on Ionic volute; white lilies brought from Africa, tended (so priceless) in wet moss though the ranged rowers dropped, at the last, dead of lingering thirst, such precious mystic flower, for which men had fallen backward that they, more suave, more delicate, might be placed stiff with fragrant petal in Hedyle's frail fingers. Freesias. Wrapped in cold moss though rowers died for it. Blue wood-lily. The wine-coloured single violet-shaped, acanthus-leaved spear of blossom they had brought from Lydia, the small valley-lily, growing a white spar against a heavy water-lily like blade of foliage, a simple yellow lemon-lily, the famous, not wholly beautiful orchid-lily with its lavender, marked like some pale butterfly, the soul, the very visible embodiment of beauty. Last and most poignantly the white shaft that was simply the Greek lily of the islands.—HEDYLUS.

We be the gods of the East,
Older than all,
In the fume of the incense,
The clash of the cymbal,
The blare of the conch and the gong.—THE NAULAHKA.

TILBURY DOCK once more, for this is the penultimate of ten long voyages taken during seven years of supreme anguish, whose sanguine grapes of pain appear in this book.

September 14th, 1928. Embarked on the *Rawal Pindi* for India. The last voyage outward bound till the great Outward Bound.

We pass between Chatham and Shoeburyness, our home in the dear old days of the dear old world before the Armageddon. "Shoe," where the cinerarias glistened in the garden by the sea. Where the thunder of the guns in that last year before the Deluge never ceased. Chatham, where the hammering in the dockyards never stopped, day or night; significant note for those who had ears to hear. Where we heard, four years before, what the Admiralty knew to a year, but the nation's ear was waxed too gross to hear. Whence he and I took the last outward bound together.

September 17th. Off Portugal, saw a circle of sharp blades of porpoises glistening steely in the sunlight close to ship. As they dived, their white breasts gleamed like huge, pearly, incandescent lights, flashing into the dark electric-blue depths. Later, the sea turned to pale blue spun glass. On this, floating towards Finisterre, was a fairy brig all in white, white hull, and four snowy, pointed pinions unfurled.

This is an unusual sight, and only met on a Southern Sea, these white wings that never grow weary. In the cold north, coal, tar and oil prevail.

But the white wings, though unweary, beat more slowly than the blast of our oil furnaces. So, the white ship faded quickly behind, phantom-like, in our wake.

> Where lies the land to which the ship would go?
> Far, far ahead, as all her seamen know.
> And where the land she travels from? Away,
> Far, far behind is all that they can say.*

* This verse was quoted by Lord Curzon in a speech on education in India.

In the evening, the porpoises turn up again, white-bellied, gleaming through our wash of phosphorescent ink. An old tar informs me they are not quite the same as dolphins, the beloved of the Sea Queen rising from the waves, which are a little smaller. Here and there, small living sea mushrooms, rings and sickles, float transparently in the ink, delicate sea-weeds spray fronds of sea-ferns and moss.

Gib, lion-like, guarding the Great Gate of the Empire beyond the seas. Algeciras, twenty miles out of the squalor and meanness of the town, is reached by motor. White-roofed, bathed in sea-lights, the white hotel has green garden swathing. With its French cuisine and nectarines, gleaming pearly on the waters, it promises lethe of the past. Here, one tired, would remember nothing any more.

The captain's table, the usual symposium. He somewhat overdoes the bluff sailor. On one side of him sits an aristocrat with a sharp tongue, on the other an exact replica of Gladys Cooper in *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, with the same horror of oranges that Lord Roberts had of cats, and who sinuates up and down the deck, a subtle perfume trailing behind her. The grey-haired woman runs the sports.

An old General at the table had a lady to visit him with that most ghastly and grisly of grins, the "worn smile of many seasons." It came at the slightest provocation, and was fearful in its metallic brightness combined with a carroty

toupee. The intimate friend of a Maharani not only blazes with jewels from Paris, but wears the creepy, mocking expression of a certain sort of clown, like the moon when she grins.

A wretched Parsi youth, whose beauty allied with brains, have been his undoing in the West, wears a wig, fondly hoping it will be undetected and enhance a romantic appearance. Not so. Nature avenges herself on those who flout her primary laws by transforming them into pantaloons.

The moon is dropping her Western plate-like form and assuming globular contours of the East. To-night she turns the three-quarter face of a white pierrot towards us, laughing at the manifold follies on board.

Mr. Watson, Political Secretary to the Viceroy, next to me at table, speaks glowingly of Lord Irwin. Calls him the first English gentleman to rule India since Lord Minto. But Minto was only a gay man of the world. Irwin was chosen by Mr. Baldwin, in these critical days, because of his deep religious feeling, united with sagacity, which appeals to an India whose greatest Incarnation has said :

> They that worship other gods worship Me.

He told me that a rising, brilliant young man had had his career dwarfed through no fault of his own. He had only had the honour of serving under Sir Michael O'Dwyer. No Government would dare to make him Governor of the

Punjab after that. And Sir Michael O'Dwyer would never heed another.

K. T.—"Why was Sir Michael not assassinated?"

Mr. Watson.—"Because they are afraid of him. The assassin who strikes with no hope of escape is a very rare bird."

K. T.—"Then Dingra was a rare bird?"

Mr. Watson.—"Very."

K. T.—"How is it that that terrible series of assassinations has quite ceased?"

Mr. Watson.—"Because we have all the gangs of assassins in our net."

He said he would not put his son into the I.C.S. Now there are fifteen per cent. of Indians in it, but we are fast hurrying to fifty per cent. Nevertheless, he thinks India can never get on without the white man. The Hindu and the Mohammedan will never lie down together, so he thinks India will become a Crown Colony.

We see sea-serpents daily. In the morning, a typical Mediterranean sun rises red in dove's-breast grey, and throws a broad, glittering gold serpent on a Nile-green sea. In the evening a sickle moon throws subtle, slithering, silvery snakes on an electric-blue.

Passing Pontilario, a convict isle, one hundred miles south of Sicily. Entering the seas where burning Sappho sang. The sun burns on a bride with a burnished-copper head and blue smock. Her figure has the grace of a Greek athlete as she wields deck quoits.

Commissioner Unsworth, of the Salvation Army, is on board, and narrates his experiences in quelling the White Slave Traffic.

He says the devils are not quite so black as painted, as it is necessary to pile on the horrors to get the League of Nations to act at Geneva. He does not believe, for instance, as Lucas Netley states, that five bogus marriages ever take place per day in the big brothels of Paris to ship deluded brides to the Argentine; where would the passports come from? Nor that the Chief of Police in Paris fraternizes in cafés with the chief monster of the trade. *Au contraire*, he states that the Paris police were true as steel and guarded him from furious *apaches* when he attacked the Folies-Bergères. As this centre of nude attractions is mainly manned by British girls, and they send touring companies round the globe, he concentrated against them and got the law passed through the Houses of Senate and Deputies to raise the age to eighteen.

The Banvard Company are on board. Mr. Unsworth pointed to them as illustrations of artists' life: they are bare-legged and free with their men on board. They draw a few pounds a week. When they return to the U.K. they may have to join the sixty thousand unemployed artists and drift into the Folies-Bergères.

Queen Mary was so pleased at the age being raised that she gave him a special seat for Princess Mary's wedding.

King George says he is the only traveller that beats the Prince of Wales.

I could not help glancing back through the years to my childhood, when this same Unsworth was stoned in the streets of our cathedral city. When military were drafted into Salisbury to quell the rioting against this same Army now honoured by royalty. When my father's eyes were closed with mud in the infirmary and my mother pelted with rotten eggs for supporting an infant cause now famed world-wide.

Mr. Unsworth said he had never met a greater gentleman than Lord Irwin in all his long experience in the House and Lobby. *Sic tempus fugit.*

Commissioner Unsworth said the fish-market of Cairo was the foulest place on earth. Many of the women in it had false certificates. When the Australians found this out, and that their health had suffered in consequence, they burned down the market, throwing the pianos out of the windows. The women presented themselves to Sir John Maxwell, who asked to see the proprietor of the street. The man sent his solicitor to represent him, but Sir John insisted on the real thing.

Lord Kitchener asked Mr. Unsworth in pre-war days to head the Purity Campaign; even Mohammedan ladies joined his committee at the Carlton Hotel, Cairo. They found women were being smuggled in, dressed as firemen, in French boats. No girl under fourteen is now allowed

on the Continent. Up to sixteen, much rigorous watch is kept on the passport and two years penal servitude entailed on malpractice. They are trying to raise the age to eighteen. Mr. Unsworth has the O.B.E. and has been four times received by the King at Buckingham Palace.

September 24th. Last night our darkness was lighted by the fairy-lamps of Malta, but we only halted in her hospitable harbour one hour. To-day we are in sweltering heat and swinging over Sappho's turquoise seas. Rather should I call them waters of lapis-lazuli, for they are transparent. A darker cobalt shadow moves with us, the turret. This is followed by a rainbow, *not* formed by the tiny, dancing spray, but shining deeply in transparent lapis depths. Query, the cause of this strange phenomenon? No one seems to know. How exquisite must have been Sapphic eves, when the lyres were attuned by violet-crowned singers, when the zephyrs stirred Grecian draperies beside the classic seas. It is now the fashion to whitewash Sappho. Have the ages lied?

The Crown Prince of Patiala is on board with his tutor. He is a tall, handsome boy, of reserved manners, aged about twenty, wearing European dress but a tasteful muslin turban to conceal his unshorn hair. Noticing he also wore the iron bangle of the tenth Guru, I said: "Your Highness is an Orthodox Sikh. Not 'reformed,' like Kapurthala" "He is not a Sikh at all," the youth replied scornfully. He relaxed a little when I told him his father, a child of

ten on a white pony, leading his Lancers past the saluting base, had been the *pièce de résistance* of Lord Curzon's Durbar.

September 29th. Last day of terrific Red Sea heat. A perfect inundation of land birds, though no land in sight. Yellow wagtails, presumably after ship flies, hobnob with resting swallows in the rigging. They come from lands without hunters, are very tame, and perch on one's hand while reading. Even a blue jay appears. Sure and enough, within an hour, land hove in sight, though only an island, gaunt and stark. Then seven doves alight and, cooing softly in the rigging, bring the sweet message that our ark, with its noisome miasma of human animals on board, is approaching Aden, the Gate of the Indian Empire.

Nearing Bombay. The monsoon has left its aftermath. The Indian Ocean is molten lead with flying reliefs of silver in the glint of the flying fish. These skim the inky billows for long, exactly like birds, with silver breasts and outstretched wings.

Bombay, October 10th. Spent the evening in the Taj Mahal house on Malabar Hill. Fyzee Rahamin is one of the greatest decorative artists of the world. We sat out on the terrace overhanging the Bay. Pigeons cooed soothingly. The fountains sprayed coquettishly. The yellow champa flowers on a silky green plantain leaf swooned their sweetness on a blood-red cloth. Nevertheless, Attilya

Begam, his wife, herself a feminist, seemed depressed about (1) National Politics. Said political leaders were nothing but paid agitators ready to betray India to the British for money. (2) Education. A B.A. had called on them with his wife. "Here is my *she!* How is your *she?*" The Begam Sahiba added naïvely that, though she did not profess to speak perfect English, she knew enough not to call a lady a "she," besides having not only a fair acquaintance with her own literature, but also with the Shastras of the Hindus! An article appears in the *National Herald* of to-day speaking warmly of her selfless work for Mohammedan girls and the superiority of her school over that of the Bombay Government. (3) Morale of Indians, especially those now in Europe. A Maharani "going to the dogs" in night-clubs. A gilded Parsi youth in the wildest set in Paris. The Bombay Queen of Beauty drugging herself to death, also in La Ville Lumière.

A relief to go out on to the roof and see the two-pronged fork island of Bombay the Beautiful, all green from the monsoon, surrounded by its blue waters and surfy shores.

The Simon Commission is expected to land from the *Maloya* at 9 p.m. Then they will be hustled into the special white train now waiting for them beside the dock. A guard of constables is drawn up in a battalion close by. Others guard the dock gate. They will have a pilot engine. All these precautions are taken for those who have come to see

if India is fit for Home Rule. One bomb, *en route* to meet them, exploded in the train, killing its owner. Our train leaves shortly before their special. The line is guarded as for a Tzar of Russia. Nevertheless we shall be lucky if we reach Kalyan, their junction for Poona, in safety.

We crossed the Nerbudda bridge. In September, '96, the holy river became so violent, from the monsoon, that she burst the high and mighty bridge spanning her banks. The driver of the train, hearing a tremendous roar, stopped his train just in time to save an awful catastrophe. This river is of extreme sanctity, especially at Marble Rocks, where holy sages sit beside her in perpetual meditation.

October 14th. Kashi once more. This time in seclusion, secreted from the gangs the cruise ships disgorge of one hundred gaping, twanging Yanks per day, and in solitude alongside the church where his ashes have lain a year before proceeding to their long rest.

Only the silent pad of the camel daily passing, hooded to its peering eyes with bales of straw.

Only the flits of the butterflies, yellow and umber, speckled with their black and white eyes, going aroaming, always in pairs.

Only the scents of the mangoes and neams and the sweet, starry, white shower of the lottarmalti draping the Georgian front of the church, beneath the flag where the handful of faithful resort in this stronghold of Hinduism.

Only the white flowered forest of the gardenia hard by,

with the green paroquets in it, and the green balls of the limes, only the scarlet cups of the hibiscus and the pungent shock of the purple, paperish shower of the bougainvillea which knocks one down at the hotel gate, noisy and blatant as the crowds it shelters. Only the band of the snake-charmers at the gate, their bags and baskets writhing with their fangless pythons and cobras, less harmful than the human serpents inside.

Only the blue water-lily spike in my bedroom, dug from a well, hidden by its verdigris spatula leaves, mystic as a blue lotus from the Nile.

Only the sapphire and turquoise glints of the blue jay with the rosy under-breast in the peepul.

Only the chocolate unt-wallahs on the soft fawns and beiges of the unts passing.

Only the sharp, blood-red cries of the flocks of emerald parrots, whirling around the white spire against the turquoise sky.

Only the dun cows in the churchyard, each followed religiously by an attendant chela, in the elegant form of a white pelican, seeking what it may devour out of her.

Only the church attendant in immaculate white puggree and the cowkeeper in a raspberry one beside him.

Only the glint of the golden orioles in the mangoes.

Only the white bails, patiently dragging the bucket at the well, with the redundant curved humps he loved, when they drew his camp kit.

Only the hot-weather bird hammering all day long his death-knell with its metallic, maddening clang. Only the owl's discordant shriek of the shock of his passing. Only the doves cooing and soothing his rest. Only the pyramidal traces in the churchyard of the longer rest of those others brought from Benares City in 1794.

Only the ekka passing carrying two saffron-dressed ascetics *en route* from the Ghats, for it is now the Dasserah Festival to the Female Aspect of Shiv, to whom Kashi is holy.

Only the sinister howling of the jackals, their eyes green lamps, around my white shrouded bed on the verandah at night.

Only my own eyes opening on the sunrise, turning the white Georgian spire of the church to rose, where the Mutiny heroes rest. It has burrowings in the stucco like those in the marbles of the Taj Mahal. Only the velvety elephant shades of the stains on the Borghese pillar, surrounded by a ring of orange marigolds, India's sacred colour. A pre-Mutiny general rests beneath it. Where the greens of God's acre rival the greens of the Garden of Allah.

October 7th. To-day all this peace in the City of Shiv (Peace) is rudely broken. To-morrow the Governor arrives. Yesterday gay flags bedecked the cantonment. This morning I was woke ere dawn by rude cries. In the dusk was a procession of shadowy forms carrying a red flag. They

RIPPLING MARBLES.

(Of the Fatehpur Sikri Saint.)

proceeded to the cannon guarding the route and there performed a ritual of responsions. This was a Simon boycott. Later a second yellow-capped procession passed bearing a yellow flag with mystic symbol. Followed a third with many. These were Mrs. Besant's boys and other loyalists. Followed another with blue caps and banners. Still they come. When the Governor, etc., appeared, in state carriages and with royal umbrella, he was loyally greeted. But this is Holy Kashi, the City of Shiv (Peace), given over to the things of the Spirit, the Holy Ghost.

Yesterday the papers published the Congress Ultimatum, absolute independence. There is no doubt the whole Continent is thoroughly disloyal. Is this the knell of the Empire ?

Armistice Eve. The pink marble Urn, which has been reposing in the Georgian church for a year, is unpacked. It brings the Shiv influence rolling in waves through the room.

Armistice Day. Poppies, and, with muffled drums, the native cavalry band plays inside the church. There is life in the Old Lion yet !

Follows the arrival of the Brahman, with knowledge, from the depths of the mysterious city, to bless the Urn. Whose own house is difficult to find, even by his friends. We discourse of the Greater Mysteries, concealed even from him, hard by. " How can it be," I ask, " when we all apparently run over everywhere ? Is space an illusion ? "

"Time and space are both illusions."

"But there is a definite space between this verandah and the church."

"It appears so to you, but a beetle would see the space differently. So would those higher than you, as you are higher than the beetle."

He talked on, of metempsychosis and reincarnation, of maya and its king Mara, and the Buddha beneath the Bo tree. The paroquets still played in the tree-tops, their feathers flashing green as cabochon emeralds. The rasping of the insects, inseparable from Indian life, and the smell of the mangoes made me sleepy. Yet I was alert mentally. My mind seemed to sift his words and allow a trickle, fine as sand, to fall into my thoughts and mix with the sediment of orthodox creeds, the ashes left by doctrines, which my insolent imagination had burned like paper in a flame. Around me the trees were so green, the earth so warm, the air so silent, that I felt a satisfying sense of mingling with it all.

While he talked I saw, as in a cinema, a Man in Saffron walking in humility with a begging bowl, a white, anguished Figure on a Cross, a Camel Driver in the desert. Were They all One Being?

Overhead the paroquets were still screeching in the branches, and the song of the insects filled the hush. The air was thick with the scent of mangoes. It was approaching eve and the screech-owls started. The heat came up from

the warm earth, mingling with the shadows of the trees, and melting them into a diaphanous green luminance.

It enclosed all, the insects, the birds, the trees, like the tender breath of a mother. It enclosed the Brahman too; and me. I was aware of what was, to me, a new motherhood in the soil, in the surrounding warmth and greenness; for it came to me, suddenly, that we, the Brahman and I (and all men) were a part of that soil, that warmth, and greenness, and not merely a figurative part. I had a stabbing recollection of a tropical shower the day before, the sudden burst of rain that fell and was sucked in by the earth, only to ascend, an hour or two later, in the visible rays of sunlight, that transported it into the clouds again. That very moisture gave life to the green things about me now, the insects, the birds and the trees. Gave life even to us, humans, and we, so magnificent in our time, rotted like fruit left in the sun and mingled with the soil, to perpetuate a future growth of humans in an amazing and ironic immortality of the body.

Shifting dust-hills! But through them played a wind, played just as the wind was playing in the palm trees now, a distillation of some Universal Substance that filtered into earth and earthmen, and, when the law of action ceased, passed back into that all-pervading Substance like mist, melting through a wire screen, only to return in different forms.

It was very old, that simple revelation that unfolded there beneath the mango tree, on the verandah; a truth

that the men of Babylon must have known. That others surely dreamed in Nineveh and Tyre. And out of all this wandering, this lingering in ancient cities, in jungle and in desert, over the burial grounds of dead civilizations, among the ruins of others; in mosques, in temples, in cathedrals; out of all these melancholy contradictions, that is the one thing of value that I have learned, the existence of a Oneness of Earth and Man over which a Sublime Compassion casts an illusion of beauty.

That and one other. And only the greatest shock of my life awoke me to it.

A shock which has sent me staggering and reeling down to the crematory because it was necessary to that Plan for me, who had always served the personal self, sometimes in defiance of the Divine Self,

> "for the self is the Self's enemy."

The existence of a Plan, a Plan, which if we only conform to it, working in our small corners in conformity with the Divine Pattern, brings the maximum of success into our puny lives. But if we attempt to break the Universal Design in the thread of our midget movement, promptly draws down from Eternal Righteousness a ruinous vengeance and destruction.

> It is now and it is here,
> The something beyond all things dear,
> The miracle that has no name!
> When I am not, then I am:
> Having nothing, I have all.

It was my hands that built my prison wall,
It was my thought that did my thought confine,
It was my heart refrained my heart from love.
Now I am stilled as in a gaze divine,
Now I flow upward from my secret well,
Now I behold what spirit I am of.
The Body is the Word ; nothing divides
This blood and breath from thought ineffable.
Hold me, Eternal Moment !
The Idols fade : the God abides.

The Brahman left his magnetism as a benediction of peace.

This morning, on waking in the white mosquito curtains of my verandah bed, I saw, from the pillow, what appeared to be a high wall of greenery between us and the other hotel across the kirkyard. But, on rising, it resolved itself into only the branches of a tree. The apparent new wall was only the flaming red branches of the gold mohur tree. The mosquito net turns greens, reds and blues of the morning glory all round into Aubusson tapestry. Parable of Maya.

The church hymns synchronize harmoniously with the cry of the muezzin, the clang of the temple bells.

All religious belief has only one significance, that of leading to self-realization ; it means the imaginative exposition of being, the mirror of the centre of being in our consciousness. Undeveloped human beings must believe in something external, because they have no other means of focusing their powers, of condensing them to dynamic unity.

Walked to the Club through the matured Company's

garden, where languid, early Victorian ladies in flounces discussed Mutiny news. The evening sun burned above the Birna. In the foreground tennis players tossed balls. Soon they will motor home to dress, to return, an hour later, for cocktails and gramophone dancing before dinner.

We are in the heart of the Hindu world. Out of all that gallant company not one takes the trouble to study the hoary religion of their ancestors. Dealing out justice by day, yes. But without an iota of interest for what India can teach, or in her " mysterious civilization."

The Brahman called to-day, and with a broad white tilak of Shiv upon his brow. He told me of an astrologer of great power. He lives near Dasaswamedh, the Thrice Holiest, itself a recommendation.

Dasaswamedh is the Ghat of the Ten Horse Sacrifices performed by a potentate in redemption of his mother's sin.

It was the greatest of all sacrifices, its meanest offices were performed by royalties.

When the horse was liberated, to roam at will, each ruler of the territory he entered had to defend it by the sword.

Between Dasaswamedh and the Bisheshwar are the Holiest Places of the Planet.

The astrologer has written making an appointment for Friday. This is not an inauspicious day for a Hindu.

After passing the guest-house of H.H., on the outskirts of Cantonments, we went through miles of drab slums till

the bright coloured shawls and ascetics' shrimp heralded the approach of the Ghats. We turned off a side street and pulled up at the quiet courtyard of Chintamani Mukerji, another brahman friend. He led me to the astrologer's chamber, impossible for the uninitiated to find. We traversed a school garden, then down a narrow passage leading to the Ghats, and, beneath a peepul, in a tiny room on the ground floor, sat he whom great English sahibs delight to honour when they want to know their future. He is also a Brahman and marked with Shiv and with Malas.

I put my question.

He asks for dates and makes calculations.

It will be auspicious, he says, next year, and in May.

Will it? God knows.

In this connection I am often asked whether the horrors of Mother India are true. I can only reply that, having lived *en intime* with several Hindu families, I have seen none of them, with the exception of the too early marriages. This particular Brahman of the Urn had resolved to set an example in this respect with his daughter. But, a good match having offered, the all-powerful ladies of the family insisted on the girl's marriage at twelve. Result, she died of fever within a year.

Three Burmese Buddhist pilgrims, father and two sons, are passing through the hotel to-day. They go to Sarnath and Gya. They radiate the peace of the Blessed One, in silken skirts. They say that few Burmans have the time

and money to do this, their second tour. Now they must return to the paddy-field season of Rangoon.

The Limbin Mintha's daughter, niece of King Theebaw, he of the Palace of Golden Flames, has just married an English bookie. What bathos !

Her father, the dear old exile of Allahabad,* disliked the match, but the girls were anglicized and he could not stop it.

The Crown Prince of Germany owed his curtailed Indian tour to the eldest. Meeting her at a ball, given in his honour by a regiment, he was so charmed with this victim of the British he refused to open the State Lancers or to sup with the colonel's wife. He returned from Lucknow with his portrait for her, as an enemy of England. On the return, the motor broke down, and, at the Taluqdars Fête, there was no Prince. Result, cable from old General Graf zu Dohna to Papa, and cancelled tour. This is the *true* version, as I was present at the ball and also saw the photograph.

The blue jay still comes regularly, every morning, in lovely shades of sky and a darker blue. He sits on the telegraph wire opposite my window, balancing himself by swinging his tail. Sometimes he darts down to my verandah. Is this an omen ? Is the blue bird really flying to me ?

Christmas Eve. Visited the Bisheshwar Temple, the Heart of the Mysteries, in the City of the Holy Ghost.

First, the little upstairs shop containing Herod's shining

* *Vide* "Cities Seen."

tissues, overhanging the Temple. The proprietor complains bitterly he cannot pay the enormous commission for the hotel custom. It has been raised four times to R.4,000.

Sick of this sordidness, we descend to the old Bisheshwar. The court is surrounded by shops filled with marble and brass emblems and implements for worship, etc., exactly as St. Peter's at Rome.

In the brass bazaar the air was vibrating with metallic sounds. Tawny men sat cross-legged in the midst of piles of shining bowls, bells, and burners.

> And the pots, and the shovels, and the basons: and all these vessels, which Hiram made to King Solomon for the house of the Lord, were of bright brass.
>
> And Solomon left all the vessels unweighed, because they were exceeding many: neither was the weight of the brass found out.

The cloth market, adjoining the brass bazaar, was an immense shed where long aisles, aromatically cool with the waxy odour of Kabul, wandered among numerous stalls. Hundreds of pieces of silk, worked into weird mythological figures, hung in panels in little alcoves like shops. Sienna and ochre and bistre and gamboge. Most of the silks were of these sacred hues, hung close together, merging into vast pieces of tapestry that seemed to tone the intruding sunlight to twilight.

Aurangzeb drove down a mosque on the top of the Temple. Poor old boy! It cost him Hindustan and availed naught! We searched fruitlessly for that passage

which can *never* be found, except by those who *know*. Then we descended further to the winding way overhung by marble spires, past the delicate traceries of Durga's shrine and shops filled with thousands of lingams of all sizes, to Anapurna's. It was bathed in a golden light, and hung with scarlet saris. An ancient fakir, with matted locks and white beard, sat in a corner. A young woman in crimson prostrated before the altar. Cows jostled, pigeons flew, crowds passed in and out. But, in a few steps, came the sharp, keen smell of marigolds heaped high in orange mountains before the door of the Lord of the Universe, surmounted by the golden spire of Ranjit Singh. It is the Holy of Holies of Hinduism. For us, only a side peep-hole available. A silver door, an excited crowd, intoning above the Lingam. It is not the day, not the hour, it is an off time, but they come, drawn by the Mightiest. Never ceases the sonorous clanging of the bell.

We slip past to the Well of Knowledge, fringed by women in purple and mauve. All around are walls, spires, trees, lanes, alleys, layer upon layer, dense, subtle, mystic, hazy, dazy, bewildering. We are "back from where we started." Yes, so shall we ever be till "the feet have been washed in the blood of the heart."

The Brahman of the town has just retold to me the oft-told tale of how a Brahmani of knowledge took Mrs. Besant to this spot. They turned down a passage appearing to lead *from* the Temple. Then the Brahmani disappeared. Mrs. Besant, to her surprise, found herself at the Temple again. Then the Brahmani reappeared.

"Whence come you?"
"From the Holy of Holies."
"But the passage never turned!"
"It happens so sometimes," replied the smiling Brahmani.
Never again could that passage be found.

Benares is the most fascinating problem of the Spiritual Life. We *know* there are mysteries concealed there. How much is physical? How much is astral or etheric? Where is the space for the former? "Time and space are illusion." Yes, but space is a very real thing when one has to walk a mile. Time when one has to catch a train.

There we will leave it. It beats me.

But always will Kashi be most holy, the Lingam the centre of all Mystery, all Power.

May the Lords of Karma remember that in the hour of reckoning. May the Lord of the Bisheshwar Temple and of the Mysteries of Kashi, whose Western name is the Holy Ghost, see that there are other satis of more prolonged torture than those of the flaming fire.

Maurya of the imperial Rajput dynasty, Master of the White Lodge, who as far back as the Moru of the old Kalki Purana is writ of as the leader of the new race.

Radiant vision of bridal days, may the widow's devotion bring her back to you. You live. May we see more of the glories of Maurya.

This will be my last message when the crimson karupi flowers entwine our coral alabaster urns in Holy Kashi, where, if they only knew it, lies the hope of the whole human

race. They will rest side by side on a cactus court train of asphodel silk for altar cloth, hemmed with the Doge's Venetian lace, in that museum, filled with gleanings from all lands of our travels, which I am leaving for our track marks as the gypsies leave wisps of flowers along their grassy routes.

> Alone beyond the pale
> Where square and circle coincide,
> And the parallels collide,
> And perfect pyramids flower.

It is the City of the Great Ones. There is no other way. No middle course. Either the Temple of Lubentina or Amarnath. The heights of Heaven or the depths of hell. Kashi or Montmartre. Make your choice! *Faites vos jeux, Messieurs! Messieurs, faites vos jeux!*

THE MYSTERY OF THE SALVATION OF WOMEN

MANDU

If I were given the choice of revisiting one single spot in the whole length and breadth of India that choice would unhesitatingly fall on Mandu.—YVONNE FITZROY in "Courts and Camps of India."

No book is published on Mandu.—MESSRS. THACKER SPINK.

Parmi des jardins merveilleux, un palais où tout est disposé pour la vie libre et pour l'amour.—LE JARDIN DES SUPPLICES.

A nude girl reclined on a sand-bank at the water's edge, while a rock manakin, its plumage changing colour with every movement, from the deepest saffron to the lightest blue, flitted from stone to stone calling cheerily, as it displayed its different dresses to the naked girl, "Just suits, Madam, just suits, Madam, only two-and-nine, only two-and-nine."—THE IVORY COAST.

Mandu, the ancient capital of Malwa State, possesses a most interesting history. The centre of war and intrigue, and the loves of Kings, from the early days of the thirteenth century, it is now in ruins, but romance still clings to these, as the reader may judge for himself.

Hackwood,
Basingstoke.
December 30, 1912.

DEAR MADAM,

I am greatly obliged to you for allowing me to see a copy of your book,* upon a few passages only of which will I touch.

You quote Jacob on page 250 as authority for the rope trick or phenomenon. It would be interesting to know if any European were present beyond Jacob and can vouch for the performance. When I was in

* "Cities Seen."

India I caused it to be widely known that I would handsomely remunerate any performer who could show me this feat. But from all parts of India came the reply that no one did it or had ever seen anyone do it.

The story is over a thousand years old. You should read Yule's Marco Polo, I, 309, where you will find all about it with the names of the mediæval authorities.

But an attested case, seen by European witnesses, I have never been able to discover.

I wonder who are the two ladies whom you allude to on page 109 to 110. I think I know the first of the two. But the second, on page 110, who came to grief, I cannot identify. Poor creature. Who was she?

I alighted by accident on page 180, to which you did not call my attention! It contains a number of mistakes.

Sir Louis Dane had nothing to do with the partition of Bengal for or against it. He was in Afghanistan and England at the time and was never called upon to express his opinion.

Sir Denzil Ibbetson was one of its strongest advocates.

I did not say at Calcutta that "Hinduism inculcated lying or that the Hindus were all liars," or anything even remotely resembling it.

I happen to have a copy of my speeches which was brought out when I left India, and on page 491 you will see I did not say anything like that.

When next you go to India I hope you will go to Mandu, which I am glad to think I saved from the Jungle, oblivion and ruin, and which is one of the finest things in the world.

Further, I wish you all success in your efforts to pierce the veil.

I will remember your kindly suggestion.

With all good wishes,

Yours very truly,

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

New Year's Day. A tremendous day in the bird world of Benares. As the sun, setting beyond the Birna, gilded the peepul into a golden aspen, a whole aviary of varied and gorgeous birds settled there. First came the king of our birds here, the bluebird, the jay, the harbinger of bliss, clucking as he tweaked his tail up and down on a twig. And then the crow-pheasant, an enormous blackbird with brown wings. And then, another variety of crow, small, sable, sinister and double-tailed, and then the woodpecker, like a giant bullfinch, with a long tail. Beneath, in the dead leaves, grubbed the humble seven sisters. Suddenly the sinister one swooped down on a sister. She flew away shrieking, pursued by the crow in and out among the shrubs and eventually into the mango tree, where they were lost to sight but not to sound. Much shrieking in the thickets. The chase was so exciting, like a miniature aviation battle,

that the woodpecker and even the bluebird flew down and joined in. The sinister one pursued another sister, but with what fell intent I know not. But all day long the bluebird, with soft breast of rose, bright-eyed, jaunty-tailed, spread its glorious wings of sky striped with darker blue. As, long ago in the West, that most gracious undergraduate saw in the yellow snapdragon on the grey walls of Oriel a symbol of renewed hope, so is the bluebird flying to me for New Year.

The compartment from Benares is full of Indian ladies returning on "concession" tickets from their Women's Convention. A sign of the times. Still more so is their rudeness and shrill defiance in the compartment. India slowly but surely is passing from British rule. Moral, invest no money therein.

After a weary twenty-four hours the train arrives at Kandwa Junction at midnight. The Indian ladies rush into the waiting-room and secure the only couch. I have to sleep on the table.

Next morning a tiny train to Mhow, through the real central core of Hindustan. Luscious palms above jungle lakes, and everywhere the red smears on rock and milestone bespeak the faith of the ryot, rude, crude, enduring for millions of years. The real Indian names of the stations—Attar, scenting of roses, and Choral, where that famous Hindu-American marriage took place. We are now in the vast Indore territory. Having completed her conversion cere-

mony at Nassik, on the Godavery river, the bride proceeded here for her civil marriage. Yellow thorns like mimosa. Huge grey apes squat on a tiny stump. Crowds of vultures, sinister as the souls of the damned. A fantastic atmosphere prevails, perhaps born of that extraordinary marriage which recently convulsed East and West. Whose first-fruits are even now on the way, a child whose destiny none can foretell. Whose aftermath is a fresh terrible scandal of mother and daughter imprisoned for years in a lonely fort at the despot's will. Whose ending to the poor young American girl, who sought for truth *via* Eastern pathways with the enterprise and courage of her race, none can see.

We have now reached Bawaha where the civil marriage took place. There is the Red Palace where the long-suffering first wife, a charming enlightened woman, after threats of fasts on her part, was prevailed upon to present the U.S.A. interloper to her Lord. We cross the bridge over the river down which the bride floated with the Maharaja on the evening of her marriage, after Ganesh Puja, in a little boat. The palace, a country house, is the one oasis in this dreary desert waste. How disillusioned the poor girl must have been by this time! The last act of the drama is now being played in Paris.

A native and his wife get in, and he sticks his dirty shoes on to the seat towards me and reviles me for calling him "that man" to the guard: more signs of the times. The

toy train wound up the Vindhya hills with wonderful engineering feats. At last the familiar Niagara on our left heralded the approach of Mhow, the military station to keep Holkar quiet. Mhow is noted as the place where Laurence Hope wrote her hectic verse. We are now on the great Central Indian plateau. The Dhar State motor drove me over thirty-three miles of dreary plains to the oasis of the Maharaja's guest-house, a luxurious Western bungalow. When the Maharaja's secretary calls, he has reminiscences of her and how her girlish marriage to an elderly man exemplified Hindu ideals on the subject, that marriage is of the spirit, not of the flesh. He said the second scandal *re* the Maharaja Holkar was unfounded and that Miss Miller had a good influence over him and that he was a man with very charming manners. He said the reigning family were driven from Rajputana to the Deccan by Hindu feuds. In the eighteenth century Holkar, Scindia, and this were A.D.C.s to the Peishwa. Hindu rule over the Deccan and Central India had been re-established by Shivaji, and thus these great families reign now. More of Shivaji later. Here on the verandah of the guest-house, with the cooing of doves all round, I shall write a résumé of one of the world's greatest love stories, whose location we are here to see. The story of Rupmati and Baz Bahadur. She was the daughter of a Rajput. He, when hunting on the hill, heard her sing. She long denied his suit, for a daughter of the sun may not mate with a Moslem. First, of course, Mandu belonged

to the Hindu line of Malwa, whose Prince, even now, is considered the greatest intellect of India's lords. They were of the Fire-Races coming from the Sacred Fire-Pit of Mount Abu. They came to Malwa about A.D. 800 and reigned to 1310.

Vakpati, "Lord of Eloquence," was the "Sun for the Eyes of Maidens." Vairasinha, Munji, and Bhoja, the scholar Kings, collected all the wit and erudition of India, but ever hastened from disputation and recital to stem the current from the North. They were book-loving Kings and builders of delicate fanes. Bhoja stands out, from the mists of antiquity, as writer and poet, as well as soldier, in days of turmoil and invasion: "the illustrious Bhoja the Poet King." At last his line was vanquished by the strong men of the North, who built on the Hindu ruins their simple virile buildings. The Pathan, or Afghan, style is distinct from the Moghul or Turkestan style at Bijapur, described in "The Voice of the Orient." There are three hundred single-block ten-foot pillars in the Jama Musjid, but no minarets anywhere, so there is no Voice from the Minaret. The buildings were once covered with blue and emerald tiles, glowing with colour and dazzling in the sun.

Shere Shah, he of the Indrasprastha Mosque at Delhi, was the last of the Afghans.

In the year 1235 Altamash seized Ujjain and sacked Bhilsa, the two principal towns of Malwa, and established a Musalman domination which continued unbroken till A.D.

1401, when Timur swept through India with his hosts of infidels. In the resulting confusion Dilhwar Khan Ghori, the Governor of Malwa, proclaimed his independence, thus starting the dynasty of the Malwa Sultans. He died in 1405, when his son Hoshang Shah ascended the throne and almost immediately moved the capital from Dhar to Mandu, twenty-one miles distant. Hoshang Shah spent most of his life in fighting with the neighbouring Sultans of Guzerat and died in 1434, being buried in a very fine mausoleum, which stands behind the Jama Musjid. Mahmud Khilji succeeded to the throne, and under him Malwa reached the zenith of power, peace and prosperity. His activity was unceasing, his tent was his home, and the battle-field his resting-place, although his reign was marked by the absence of any enmity between the Hindus and their rulers. He extended his dominions in all directions, even as far as Ajmere in Rajputana and Elichpur in the Berars. He received embassies from Egypt and Bokhara.

Mahmud died in 1469 and was succeeded by his son, Ghyas-ud-din Khilji, who on his accession announced to his nobles and the public that he intended to give over the Government of his realm to his son, Nasir-ud-din, and to retire to his harem. His conception of ease and comfort was sensual pleasure, and in pursuit of this ideal money was extorted from his vanquished neighbours and from his subjects. At one time there were no less than fifteen thousand women in the palace. Beautiful women were

drawn from all over the globe—school-mistresses, dancers, embroiderers, musicians, and women of other trades and professions. Five hundred Turkish women stood on his right hand on ceremonial occasions, dressed in men's uniform and armed with bows and arrows, and on his left he had a guard of honour of five hundred Abyssinian women, also dressed in uniform and provided with firearms.

Comparative peace reigned throughout the kingdom for some time, but soon Nasir-ud-din, the elder son, grew impatient for the throne and eventually attacked his father and murdered his brother with the whole of his family. He then subdued the city and had himself crowned King; and a few days after his father was found dead in his palace, it being alleged that he had been poisoned by the orders of Nasir-ud-din.

Nasir-ud-din ascended the throne of Malwa in 1501. He was notorious for his cruelty, was fond of women and fonder of wine. An instance of his cruelty is here recorded. One day while intoxicated he fell into a reservoir, and four female slaves who witnessed the accident hastened to the spot. They extricated him after much difficulty and revived him. He complained of a headache and the women informed him of the accident. Taking their statement to be untrue, and thinking they were reproaching him for his drunken habits, he put all four to the sword with his own hands! Nasir-ud-din eventually met his death in 1511 by falling

into a tank at Kaliadeh near Ujjain in one of his drunken fits. On that occasion no one dared to rescue him. He was so despised in his time that the Emperor Jehangir, when he visited Mandu in 1616, had his remains disinterred and thrown into the Nerbada. Nasir-ud-din's second son, commonly styled Mahmud II, succeeded him. He imagined that kingdoms were ruled by the sword alone and soon came to grief in trying to carry out these principles. He was eventually taken prisoner by the Rana of Chitor's ally, Bahadur Shah of Guzerat, who put him to death while he was trying to escape. With his death in 1531 the throne of Malwa passed under the Musalman of Guzerat. Three years later, in 1534, Nemesis overtook the conqueror when Humayun drove out Bahadur Shah, the latter saving his life by letting his horse down the walls of the palace by ropes and fleeing to Guzerat.

A period of confusion followed and the state was split up into a number of petty chiefships, till in 1545 the Emperor, Shere Shah, took Malwa and placed a garrison of ten thousand horse and seven thousand foot in Mandu. When the Suri dynasty decayed, Baz Bahadur, the son of Shujaat Khan, who had been Governor of Malwa under Shere Shah, declared himself independent. He was defeated by Akbar in 1561, but contrived to regain possession temporarily. He was finally defeated in 1562, and Mandu then became the headquarters of the Mandu Sarkar in the Subah of Malwa. Akbar visited the fort in 1564 and 1598,

and destroyed most of the buildings and the fort walls to prevent the place becoming the stronghold for rebels.

Then came the great Moghuls, Akbar and Jehangir, "The Talented Drunkard," and his wife, the cleverest woman who ever lived! This is a large order, but none other than the Light of the World has passed from broideress to Empress!

With them, to Mandu, came Sir Thomas Roe, Elizabeth's ambassador, "pregnant of understanding, well spoken, learned, industrious, and of comelie personage." Yet stout of heart. Insulted by an official, he brandished his "pistolls," "my frendes, them would I trust!" He evidently knew his India!

What a sight met his gaze, fresh from the mazes of the forest track and mountain gorge!

The Malwa Plateau rises sheer out of the plain, and on its edge is the huge fortified city, with its forty miles of battlemented wall. Mandu is all rise and fall of wooded hill, thick green shade, and jade green sunlight, lakes and tanks, and rich things growing richly. Among all these, sometimes lost in the forest, sometimes dominating it in red sandstone and marble, are the masterpieces of the Pathan architect. Gateways, palaces, tombs, baths, and mosques, all the splendour, erudition, and strength of a great civilization set in a scenery like the Trossachs.

Akbar destroyed many of the buildings, but some were restored by his son Jehangir, who, on one occasion, spent

six months at Mandu shooting big game. He himself writes with pride that the Light of the World shot four tigers from her purdah howdah. Sir Thomas Roe, ambassador of the great English Queen and of James I, accompanied them. To-day the Bhil hunts in the old cities and jungles with bow and arrow, and he and the leopard share the lovely old place.

Then there are mosques and lofty tombs hurling back the sunrays from glistening lapis-lazuli and the blue and green tiled domes of the north, offering all the luxury and splendour of the time, and then called "Shadiabad, the joyous city." The imperial visit lasted six months. Roe was accompanied by his chaplain, Rev. Mr. Terry. He mentions that curse of lack of water which caused the abandonment of Fatehpur Sikri by Akbar. Terry writes they were two whole days in carriages coming up the hill. In the woods were lions, tigers, and many wild elephants. The lions were kept off by fires at night. Roe says no one but Jehangir was allowed to shoot them. On his birthday he was weighed against gold and precious stones, as Malwa recently was. Terry says none of his servants would defile a mosque by sleeping in it, though pressed by want of room. The ambassador and chaplain had one on the edge of the jungle. "By wonderful mercy the furious, ravening and hunger-bit animals did not make their prey of our bodies." A lion carried off my Lord ambassador's "little neat white shock" which ran out barking at him. Jehangir has a

pet lion. He writes: "Nur Jehan asked my leave to shoot the four tigers marked down with her gun. I replied, 'Be it so.' In a trice she killed these four tigers with six bullets. I had never seen such shooting! I ordered R.4,000 to be scattered over Nur Jehan and gave her ruby wristlets worth a lac. To shoot from the back of an elephant, within a closed howdah" (she was evidently purdah), "four wild beasts with six bullets is wonderful." For the Shab-i-barat they had illuminations; "the countless lights with which the palace and buildings were lit, shining on the lake, made its whole surface appear on fire."

The Jahaz Mahal or "Ship Palace" takes its name from the lakes between which it stands. The water in the early days must have reached to the walls of the palace, but at the present day all around it lie endless ruins buried in creeping plants. The guard-room, not far from the palace, was the residence of the Amazon guards of Ghyas-ud-din Khilji.

Leaving the guest-house, we drive past pale pastel fields of blue linseed and yellow mustard, past a summer kiosque where the boy Prince and four Princesses play, and where the late Maharajah fed the buck bounding about. He died at forty, having kept death at bay for fourteen years.

After twenty-two miles, we reached the hill country, the edge of the great scarp of the Malwa plateau on which

Mandu stands. It is heralded by groves of orange lantana beloved of Laurence Hope. In fact, the whole city is now buried in this beautiful orange flower. On the left is a lotus tank, once lighted by Jehangir's lamp, called the Queen's Tank. Here was once the residence of Sir John Malcolm, when the British held Malwa. As we wind up the hill, there are domes everywhere, like Delhi in the old days, like the Panjab now, mournful, desolate, where departed warriors lie.

We pass the Delhi Gate and Aurangzeb's Gate, and, with the strange contradictions of the East, "the Sweeper's Gate." All about are groves of orange, of feuille-morte, walls still scrapped with sapphire tiles, and the historic tamarind trees. In fact, the whole vista is hills, woods, and domes. We pass the Jama Musjid. The immense size is impressive.

Having left our basket at the rest-house, where vice-roys lunch, we motor on, still through orange forests, past lakes and tanks covered with duck, to "the Nurses' Palace." This has a lovely echo. Domes, still domes, and black buffaloes, each with a white pelican on his back. They are herded by women in gay garments and silver jewels. Still on for miles, always in the walls, we pass Baz Bahadur's Palace and then, on foot, up the steep hill to our goal, the Bride's Palace. First, we passed her swimming bath, the stairs descended by her dainty feet, and mounting to the Chattris she had built on her bower. This was to

refresh her after passionate nights of love with Baz Bahadur. Channels conducted the rain-water from above. Then there are two long arched corridors for her servants, and then up to her private apartments and on to the roof overhanging the very scarp of Malwa, one thousand feet sheer below, and there, in the far distance, shone the waters of her island home and, beyond, the silver streak of the Nerbada, which confers sanctity on every stream for thirty miles. India's most wondrous view, of forty miles.

Far away in the clouds shone another white streak, still the Nerbada. Being on the edge of the cliff of Malwa, the city wall passes at our feet for its forty miles surrounding of domes, trees, and lakes. It passes out to the right again, still above the scarp, to back the great Jama Musjid and away to the Delhi Gate again. "Shaped like the Isle of Wight!" says my intelligent guide; a wonderful vista of yellow trees and mellow domes. "The only mistake Baz Bahadur made in military tactics was not to guard the steepest hill, two miles from here. He thought it safe, but the enemy got in." He opines this palace, with its suite of only three rooms, including a dainty bower at each end, was only used in the hot weather. A stair leads down to the bath from them.

We are indebted to Mr. Lionel Crump, late Resident of Gwalior, not only for this, one of the world's greatest love stories, told completely in the West for the first time, but also for original paintings made of it at the time. Not

enough can be said for Mr. Crump's indefatigable pursuit of all this. The MS. is called

"A Strange Tale of Faithfulness."

It begins,

> "In the name of God
> Who exalted man by the gift of love."

The author of these stories of Rupmati, translated by Mr. Crump, was at Akbar's Court. He was informed by the groom of the bedchamber who had been present at her last singing at the final pleasure-party given by Adham Khan in the palace of Baz Bahadur when he *thought* Rupmati would surrender to his lust.

The translation begins:

> Long after thy pavilions crumble down,
> When age-forgotten Mandu's dying fame,
> When Rewa's Godhead, desecrate, departs,
> Still shall thy songs be sung by sage and clown
> And green as Malwa's monsoon-hills, thy name
> Live on her children's tongues and in their hearts.

This poem is taken from the Kama Shastra, an early Sanskrit work on women, which classes Rupmati with Draupadi, Sita, and Savitri, as Ladies of the Lotus, the flower from which Brahma was born.

Rupmati, Queen of Mandu, lived and died faithful to husband and ideal.

Baz Bahadur was the last king of the doomed city, whose omen is in the saying:

"The dawn of Benares, the eve of Oudh, the night of Malwa!"

We have seen that the city is forty miles in circuit of walls. Baz Bahadur, or Falcon, was a great warrior, who made impregnable Mandu his capital, a musician, a singer. His court was "a bevy of nightingales in a garden of roses." He was also a mighty hunter.

Rupmati was a Rathor, a daughter of the moon. The Udaipur line, "of the sun," alone has never married a Moghul. So, to-day, an Udaipur princess takes precedence in Rajastan over all other wives, and her son, whenever born, inherits the throne.

Rupmati was born on an island in the holy stream of the Nerbada. She was wedded at fifteen and died at twenty-one. She was a brahmani, the caste at Sarangpur.

The romantic story of Baz Bahadur and Rupati runs thus: Baz Bahadur, when hunting on the hill, was captivated by the singing of Rupmati, the daughter of a Rajput. She long refused to accept his addresses, but finally consented to do so if he would bring the Nerbada, or Rewa, river up to the summit of the hill.

"Never will I marry thee till the waters of Rewa, Goddess of my worship, flow through thy royal city there on high."

Her father said he would poison her with opium rather than permit it.

With the assistance of the river god, who told him to

seek a spring under the roots of a tamarind, Baz Bahadur discovered the source and imprisoned the waters in the Rewa Kund, a picturesque lake which still stands just below his palace.

The Goddess Rewa appeared to her and told her of the tamarind spring. The marriage took place.

Fair was life to them on the roof of the Ship Palace, looking out over mosque and tomb, dome and cupola of blue, green, and yellow and marble white, and beyond to lake and wood, to hill and vale, fair as the music in their ears and the love in their hearts.

"We are thy bees and thou art lotus flower," she wrote him from this harem.

The palaces of Baz Bahadur and Rupmati are of special interest. A good road leads to the edge of the mighty cliff which bounds Malwa on the south. Here, perched on the very edge, stands the palace of Rupmati, Baz Bahadur's love, with his own palace just below hers near the Rewa Kund.

He built this new palace by the spring of Rewa. When the day of disillusion came she sang:

Dead is the day when thou wast one with me.

Then he would leave his wine and women and answer her with a couplet and revive their passion.

Akbar's own historian, one of his Great Four, wrote in the Akbarnama of her death.

"From love of Baz Bahadur she bravely drank the cup of death and carried her honour to annihilation."

Adham Khan entered Malwa in 1562. Baz Bahadur was forced to fly, and he took refuge in Sarangpur, Rupmati's home and birthplace, where he was finally defeated. After his flight, Rupmati was left to the mercy of his conqueror and committed suicide as the only means of escape.

First she fled from the capital, disguised as a flower seller.

Fifteen horsemen pursued her twenty miles, and found her defended by her brothers. They killed them all. She was brought back to Adham Khan. Even the ladies of her harem advised her to submit, hoping to retrieve their former splendours. When she saw no hope of escape, she wrote begging release. He replied :

" I sacrifice all earthly bliss, all hopes of paradise for one minute of thy love."

She told him she would receive him in three days.

The last night, he gave a feast in the palace of Baz Bahadur. The groom of the chambers said that tongue and imagination failed to describe it. But the songs sung by Baz Bahadur's bards were of ill omen. The party ended in shivers of fear. At dawn, the lady attired herself in her bridal robes for Baz Bahadur. She took her bin and sang. She appointed an hour to receive Adham Khan. She sprinkled the richest perfumes upon her gorgeous raiment. She lay down on her couch with her mantle drawn over her face. Her attendants thought she had fallen asleep. When the Khan arrived, they tried to wake her. She had swallowed powdered diamonds. She was dead.

"When Adham Khan saw the bird of the soul had fled from the cage of mortality, he seized a chance damsel and retired. Rupmati gave her life to be faithful, and this hath crowned her with immortality. O Mandu! queen of cities, the day of thy splendour is over. Empty are thy palaces, and dead they that dwelt therein. On the domes thereof the owl beats his drum. Baz Bahadur is dead, Rupmati is no more, but O Moghul! thy destruction is not far off!"

Akbar was so enraged with Adham Khan that he had him thrown twice from a tower till he was quite killed. His mother died of grief, in forty days, and they are both buried at Delhi.

"If anyone calls at her tomb, 'Rupmati!' the echo renders 'Baz Bahadur'!"

The old Mohammedan historian ends his tale by praising women, versus men, in matters of love. He quotes Khusru:

> Khusru in love rivals the Hindu wife:
> For the dead's sake she burns herself in life.

He refers to the Hindu Sati, as an example. Love is pre-eminent in women because God intends it should lead them to his throne. If a woman is faithful to the one man to whom she has given her word, this is enough in Hindu occultism; in fact, it is her salvation.

The beautiful love-letter, in twenty-nine quatrains of verse, religiously preserved by the brahmans of her birth-

place, ranks second to none in the world, and equal to the earth's greatest love-music, the duet of Tristan and Isolde.

Baz Bahadur outlived her. He seems to have dwindled to a noble of Akbar's Court. But though he loved many women, his heart was true to the Lady of the Lotus. His last wish was to lie by her in her island in the midst of the lotus-spread waters.

On a clear day, the view from Rupmati's Palace is a delightful one. Below the steep scarp of the Vindhyas sheer down at one's feet lies the fertile valley of the Nerbada, the sacred stream, which confers sanctity on every rivulet and lake within thirty miles, winding slowly forward amid fields well stocked with corn. To the south lie the Satpuras, stretching towards the Tapti valley, the lofty peak of Bawangaja, sacred to the Jains, standing out conspicuously.

Having drunk in this view, we then descended the hill to the famous Tamarind tank. My guide joins with Mr. Iconoclast Crump in thinking it all fable that the Nerbada waters could be brought up, without pipes, one thousand feet from below. I am enough like Ouida to want to kill them both. Hard by it is the spacious palace of Baz Bahadur, where he and she passed their bridal hours, after the Ship Palace, and lived in most of their days.

Here Adham Khan held his pre-nuptial feast and here the final tragedy took place. It is the usual Mohammedan palace, with central tank, vast halls, and

balcony overhanging the road below, where the King sat to present himself and hear petitions.

We descended, now in the motor, to the twin "nurse" domes, called so for no known reason. Here there was a remarkable echo.

One of the gems of Mandu is Humayun's tomb. Do not confuse this with its namesake of Delhi. He was the father of Mahmud I Khilji. It covers several acres with his tomb, residence, tank, and mosque all complete.

The tomb is a miniature Humayun's of Delhi, strangely enough, as this one was an Afghan (in red sandstone, with black and white lines) and the other a Moghul. Except that it has the beautiful coloured Afghan tiling and writing in Arabic in white on blue and yellow ground, which the Emperor Humayun's has not. All now is overgrown by the forests of the orange lantana.

> Closely I wove my fragrant smelling bower,
> Hoping to hide my pleasure and my shame
> Where the lantana's indecisive flower
> Varies from palest rose to orange flame.

We then regained the rest-house of the viceroys, but pass it along a winding track, *en route* for the Nilkunth Temple.

It is low down on the Malwa scarp. *En route*, we pass, strangely, the Nilkunth bird, a small, gorgeous heron in ruby and yellow and with a blue throat. Mahadev is the blue-throated God, or Nilkunth. This bird is most auspicious

to Hindus. This temple was once a mosque used by Akbar. Hinduism regains its own. The Lingam sheds a peaceful influence from the emerald tank.

After lunch we visited the great Jama Musjid. It is like the other great Jamas of Delhi and Bijapur, except for the intense turquoise of the tiles above the Mehrab. Emerald parrots flashed past them.

In front of the Jama Musjid stand the ruins of what must once have been a most magnificent tomb, that of Mahmud Khilji. On the north-east corner are the remains of a tower of victory erected by Mahmud in 1443 to commemorate his victory over the Rana of Chitor. The rooms below the tomb are said to have been a college. Two domed buildings opposite the Sagar Tallao (lake) are called the Dai-ka-Mahal and the Dai-ki-Chotti-Bahin-ka-Mahal, or the tombs of the nurse and her younger sister. Nothing is known about them, but if one stands a considerable distance from and opposite the "young sister's" tomb, a perfect echo of each word uttered is obtained.

The Jama Musjid is a magnificent example of Pathan architecture. The inscription on the building shows that it was commenced in the reign of Hoshang Shah and completed by Mahmud Khilji in 1454. Behind the Jama Musjid is the tomb of Hoshang Shah, a great marble domed mausoleum well suited to be the last resting-place of that rough warrior. A dharamsala built in Hindu style runs along the west of the enclosure.

So opposite the Jama is Mahomed Khilji's tomb, with the magnificent elephant staircase approach to it. And Husain's tomb is in delicate marbles in perforations, making a splendid trio of buildings, unsurpassed on earth, and not far off is the Ship Palace between the two lakes, beloved of Jehangir and the Light of the World, and hard by this the quarters of the female Abyssinian and Ethiopian guard.

But of what haunting sadness this inscription on one of the old mosques, dated A.D. 1600:

> At dawn and eve I watched the owls that come
> To perch on pinnacles of Shirwan's tomb,
> And in their plaintive hooting this I heard:
> Here song and wealth and majesty are dumb.

Truly a royal city Mandu, and worthy of the enthusiasm of India's greatest Viceroy. The guide says his instructions are carefully followed in the Archæological Department.

The literal translation of the above inscription at Mandu, dated 1600, runs:

"At dawn, I saw an owl seated on the pinnacle of Shirwan Shah's tomb. Plaintively it uttered its complaint: 'Where is all that glory, where all that grandeur gone?'"

His Highness the Maharaja of Dhar still has at his court musicians who can sing his pedigree one thousand years back to Paramara times, and whose masterpieces hark back to A.D. 800 at the Court of Ujjain.

The Secretary called to make arrangements for an audience of Her Highness. He told me the State was

H. E. LORD CURZON AND VICEREGAL PARTY DESCENDING THE ELEPHANT STAIRCASE OF MAHOMED KHILJI'S TOMB AND APPROACHING THE JAMA MUSJID.

governed by a Council during the minority of His Highness. No responsibility to the British for internal affairs, so long as properly administered, and no taxation to the Imperial Government. This applies to all native states which have not been annexed. To show how thoroughly Oriental all is here, he told me Her Highness was just now in a state of health which involved her being put away privily. When it was over she would see me, in a few days.

Two state officials called in the evening and informed me Her Highness would see me the day after to-morrow. Since her widowhood she has not occupied the nuptial couch, but sleeps on the floor, as a Hindu widow should.

Dhar is " The City of Sword Blades."

Mohammedanism had its ablest representative, in the West, in the person of Inayat Khan, Pir-o-Murshid of the Sufi order, just deceased. He first introduced Sufism, as such, into the Western world in 1910. Though only a musician of Baroda, he was most successful both in Europe and America. He had his headquarters at Suresnes, where his admirers had presented him with a fine, furnished villa for himself and his American wife and family. All that was most intellectual and cultivated in Paris met weekly in the handsome apartment of a rich Parisian baroness, to hang upon his lips. He spoke in English, interpreted by his organizing secretary, who sat silent with the carefully cultivated serenity and abstraction of the Buddha. A

picture of him before an Eastern mosque, with upraised arms,

Lord make me a mystic,

hung in the anteroom where the favoured few were permitted private interviews. As to his antecedents, it did not seem material to inquire.

Enough, that Sufism is derived from the Sophia of Theosophy. That its doctrines are identical with those of the Brahmans and therefore older than the Sufi poets, Hafiz and Co., older, as Inayat himself said, than Abraham, old as God himself. Enough, that they give help to countless people in East and West to-day.

Three centuries ago there were two great Mohammedans who foresaw this era of an international and united spiritual world. They planned then to lay a foundation for it in a new conception of what is Religion. One of the two was Akbar, the Emperor of India. Akbar was a Moghul and a follower of the Prophet. The second was Abul Fazl his prime minister, who had such a great influence over Akbar's religious beliefs. These two, reared in Mohammedanism, lived in India. Men of earnest and inquiring minds, surrounded by the ancient culture of the Hindus, finding on all sides a non-Mohammedan religion full of strength and lofty philosophy, it was obvious to Akbar and Abul Fazl that the millions of the Hindus around them who lived deeply religious lives could not be labelled "infidels." In what consisted the greatness of Hinduism?

Akbar expressed it in these lines :

O God, in every temple I see people that seek Thee, and in every language I hear spoken, people praise Thee.
Polytheism and Islam feel after Thee.
Each religion says, Thou art One, without equal.
If it be a mosque, people murmur the holy prayer ; if it be a Christian church, people ring the bell from love to Thee.
Sometimes I frequent the Christian cloister, and sometimes the mosque.
But it is Thou whom I seek from temple to temple.
Thy elect have no dealings with heresy nor with orthodoxy, since heresy and orthodoxy stand not behind the Screen of the Truth.
Heresy to the Heretic, Orthodoxy to the Orthodox ; but only the Dust of the Rose-petal remains for those who sell perfume.

This was Akbar's conception of Truth. Roses are of many kinds, and they grow in many lands, and many are the gardeners. But there is only one beauty of the rose—of the white rose or pink rose or the yellow. That beauty of the rose comes from God, and when once we have seen and smelt one beautiful and exquisite rose, all roses remind us of that one perfect Divine Rose which lies at the feet of God.

Listen to the Koran :

" There is no distinction between Prophets. . . . Every one of the Prophets believed in God, His angels and His scriptures and His apostles. We make no distinction at all between His apostles. . . . Say, we believe in God and that which hath been sent down unto us, and that which was sent down unto Abraham and Ismail and Isaac and Jacob and other tribes, and that which was delivered to Moses and Jesus and the Prophets from their Lord ; we make no

distinction between any of them. . . . They who believe in God and His apostles and make no distinction between any of them, unto those will we give their reward, and God is gracious and merciful."

In the Koran Jesus is represented as a prophet, and elsewhere in Islamic literature He is said to speak from the cradle, and to rebuke his schoolmaster at the age of nine months. Some of the sayings of the Mohammedan Jesus are characteristic of Oriental humour :

Jesus, on whom be peace, has said :
Truly I tell you, be not like a sieve, which lets the good meal outside, while it leaves inside only husks and chaff.
Jesus said : Be in the midst, but walk on one side.

There are several interesting stories in Islamic literature about Jesus. A dead dog's carcass polluted the air of Nazareth on a hot day. Jesus seeing it said : " How lovely are its teeth, so sharp, and white as pearls." Again, " When He was a little boy He saw a water-clock in the bazaar, and wanted to buy it for His uncle. He asked the price, which was too much, and then said : ' Will you let me have it for love ? ' ' Love, my son, what is that ? ' Jesus went to the trader and nestled His soft cheek and His curls against the man's face. ' See, I will help you, I will tidy your shop. I will bring you water,' said Jesus. Jesus did so, and the trader, amused and touched, said : ' So far, so good, but you must come and do it again.' ' Oh, yes, to-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow——' said Jesus."

THE MOTHER OF THE GREATER MYSTERIES

> More it is than Ease,
> Palace or Pomp, Honour or Luxuries,
> To have seen White Presences upon the Hills,
> To have heard the Voices of the Eternal Gods.

THE most wondrous terrace in all the world is at Ellora.

Just about midway between the North and South the plains of India end abruptly, the earth takes a leap upwards and the Deccan plateau begins. It suddenly rises some three hundred feet, forming a hill, crescent-shaped like the God Shiva's moon-crest, with its two horns facing the setting sun. During the monsoon season water pours down in a cascade and leaps into the gorge which it has cut below. Pious pilgrims, possessing imagination made potent by a faith which holds that nothing really exists but that all is illusion (maya), bathe in the waterfall and imagine that they are being purged of their sins by the sacred waters of Ma Ganga pouring over the brow of Mahadev.

The side of the hill, for a mile and a quarter, from one end almost to the other, has been excavated to form rock-hewn temples and monasteries.

The haunting beauty of the Kailash is the eighth Wonder of the World. Even in Sivaji's time it was so, Sivaji, who,

born in the reign of Elizabeth, is still the religious inspiration of the Deccan. By the way, it is worth noting that the Renaissance of the West coincided with a similar outpouring of the East. Akbar, Queen Chand of Bijapur, and Sivaji were all contemporaries of the great Tudor Queen. The name of Sivaji is still invoked at every supposed wrong. "If Sivaji were here? What would Sivaji do?" Of him more anon.

Ellora was so powerful a religious centre in India that, to this day, the Egyptian branch of the White Lodge is called the Ellora centre, as we shall see later. It was the greatest religious centre in Western India, as Benares was, and is, of the East.

The Nizam's toy railway arrived at Daulatabad at midnight. I had a very different reception in this Mohammedan country from that of the Hindu welcome at Dhar. A hired motor went round the town to get petrol. Eventually we got away, as dawn was breaking, showing we were in the Mahratta country. We passed Assaye Road and frowning natural forts. The rising sun dispelled the mists and showed the slender pile of the elegant pillar, the Chand Minar, erected by one of the Moslem victors to commemorate his conquests, mauve and pointing to the dawn. It was a fit corollary to the usual Moslem mournful forest of domes and crenellated walls and bastions. The sun gilded the Maidan into gold and a dove rose from before the motor as we reached Roza.

The Deccan and Concan, the country of the warlike nation of the Mahrattas, are remarkable for the natural forts and battlements formed by the mighty mountains of the Vindhyas and Ghauts, hiding in their wombs cave-cathedrals containing the most marvellous treasures of painting and sculpture in India. The fort of Daulatabad was a marvel of military engineering. It rose on our left as a giant black sugar-loaf. The cone, one hundred and fifty feet high, is an artificially smoothed scarp utterly impossible to climb. It was approached by a winding ascending tunnel. The opening, leading to the fortress above, used to be covered with a large iron plate on which a fire was kindled ; to make it burn fiercely a hole three feet in diameter was pierced in the rock. Through this rushed a constant current of air producing the effect of bellows.

Winding round the hill we met a regiment, band playing, brasses glinting in the sun, going to their camping ground on the plateau. It was a cheering sight, resonant of the still living British power. More tents, mosques and domes, and then more crenellated walls and the big gate of Roza.

The fort at Daulatabad, in front of which the Chand Minar rises, was positively impregnable from any attack by force of arms available in the olden days. An ample water supply, drawn from a natural spring near the crest of the mountain, existed within the walls. The ingenious defences made entrance impossible. It was through a trick of unkind

fate that the Raja, Ram Deo, was compelled to hand it over to the Moslems, in the middle of the eleventh century. He was hunting in the jungle when news was brought to him that the enemy was approaching. He issued orders that provisions should be immediately brought into the fort and stored there against a siege. The men sent out on this errand came upon bags of what they took to be wheat, deserted by a caravan of traders who had been going north with it, when they received news that the Moslem army was advancing. These bags were carried within the walls and stored; but when they were opened they were found to contain salt instead of wheat. The Raja could not bear to see his people die of starvation and surrendered.

Tradition has it that there is a secret passage leading underground from the fort to one of the temples at Ellora, and that it had been constructed to enable the Hindu Raja of Deogarh and the members of his family and court to go there to worship. It is said that Raja Raṃ Deo's beautiful daughter escaped through that way, but some Moslem soldiers later accidentally came upon her in one of the rock-cut shrines and took her prisoner, and incidentally discovered the chambers and mutilated the sculptures in them.

Roza means "The Place of Tombs." It well deserves that name, for it is the abode of the dead, containing nearly one thousand five hundred sepulchres of saints and sages, kings and viceroys.

The remains of the most august person among the dead

lie buried in a grave severely plain, bare of ornamentation of any kind—a fitting resting-place for Aurangzeb, who, in his last days, led a life of austere simplicity.

"Tana Shah," the last Hindu King of Golconda, whom Aurangzeb pursued relentlessly, also lies buried at Roza. No end of tales are told about that luxury-loving monarch's fastidious taste in perfumery and æsthetics. To see his last resting-place is to be forcefully reminded of "*tout passe, tout casse, tout lasse.*"

The remains of the first Nizam—Asaf Jah the Great—the founder of the dynasty which rules Hyderabad, are interred there, as are also those of several other members of that house.

In some ways the most romantic figure buried at Roza is that of Malik Ambar. A negro, born in slavery, he rose to be a great general and statesman, and carved a kingdom for himself.

Within a few minutes' drive from Roza lies Kagazipura, or the "Paper Town," which is struggling to keep alive its hand-made paper industry introduced in the time of Aurangzeb by craftsmen brought by him from Northern India.

The Nizam's guest bungalow here was all confusion. Nothing was ready. I found the chupatties and ghee, hastily improvised by the khansamah, most disgusting. What a difference between the hospitality of this, the leading prince of India, and that of the tiny state of Dhar, where

even wine was provided, had I cared to take it. I therefore resolved a hurried visit to the caves and to depart the same night. After a bath and hasty breakfast off the chupatties, I am off in the motor and round the hill for the first view of the most wondrous terrace in all the world. The motor makes for the central Kailash, of haunting beauty, guarded by two giant elephants, with terraces of elephants behind. I am at once struck by the air of peace and solemnity, also by the rich carving and high polish of the pillars. The whole back of the Kailash is formed of subordinate shrines to this. Is it only the haunt of the emerald parrots, the thrice-striped squirrels of Ram and hanging cones of bees which we must be careful not to disturb by cigarettes, whose smoke would mean being stung to death?

I do not believe it. But that, as in all the sacred places of India, there is more hidden than meets the eye. The whole surrounding courtyard is filled with figures of Mahadev. The Kailash, guarded by elephants, is a strange mixture of Buddhism and Hinduism. A gigantic Buddha is superimposed on the front door. Hard by, the whole history of the Ramayana is sculptured in stone.

Upstairs, reached by a precipitous stair, is a vast hall of carved pillars and polished floors leading to the Holy of Holies where the giant Lingam stands. Once it was such a holy shrine that still its influence extends as far as Egypt.

A critic remarked of the first part of this book that it

should contain more travel and less Theosophy. Yet how could I make "Veiled Mysteries" into an ordinary travel book? How can I omit references to what I have learned, in many lives, in that land of mysticism and spirituality which among the many called, has made me chosen to penetrate the outer film? How can I give you the husk without the kernel? The song without the words? A stone when the world is crying out for bread? How can I take you, for instance, to Ellora, to see its stupendous architecture, with no reference to the Power which gave the strength to hew out of the cliff the former living, fiery mysteries which have sustained the Ellora branch as far afield as Egypt to this day?

In deference to opinion, I have eliminated two chapters, the Mystery of Hades and of the Spiritual Armageddon of our times, which will appear elsewhere, but I must write of that which, to me, gives life to the hoary stones. If one would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord to write either good or bad of mine own mind; but what the Lord says, that will I write. She, the woman whose eyes are open, writes: she writes which heard the words of God and knew the knowledge of the Most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having her eyes open and remembering it next morning.

I shall see Him, but not now: I shall behold Him, but not nigh: there shall come a star out of the East: and a

sceptre shall arise out of India and shall smite materialism and destroy the noisy nudities of the children of to-day.

It was written by the Seer, of the nineteenth "*fin de siècle*": "I told him the whole truth. I said to him I had known adepts. That adepts were everywhere silent, secret, retiring, who would never divulge themselves entirely to anyone, unless one did as I did, pass seven and ten years' probation and had given proofs of absolute devotion, and that he or she would keep silent even before a prospect or threat of death."

When the Seer and her friend were passing through the Suez Canal, the friend wrote in his diary: "The venerable Tuitet Bey, passing near the Canal, sends me his greetings." He, of the Brotherhood of Luxor, is mentioned several times by the Seer. She travelled with him during her early wanderings. He worked with the Egyptian Master, Serapis. Serapis is described as being of Greek birth (as is the Master Hilarion) and blond. All his work is done in Egypt. He is of alluring appearance, ascetic, and very distinguished, resembling Cardinal Newman.

Though her own Master, Maurya, first destined the Seer as the Founder of the new spiritual movement, it was the Egyptian Brotherhood who first guided it. In America the Seer was under the supervision of the Egyptian brothers, of whom the chief is the adept, Serapis Bey. With him were others, Tuitet Bey, etc.; it was called the Brotherhood

of Luxor. Many very beautiful letters were received phenomenally, of which the first was signed as follows :

Serapis Bey (*Ellora* Section)
Polydorus Isuremus (Section of Solomon)
Robert More (Section of Zoroaster)
Tuitet Bey.

OBSERVATORY OF LUXOR,
DAY OF MARS.

Serapis spoke of the Seer as an "Ellorian." Ellora is still a place of pilgrimage, though it is no longer *reputed* as an occult centre. A whole mile of monasteries and temples still exists there.

The Kailash reigns supreme amongst the great creations of mankind, because it was inspired by a spirit of devotion. The names of the excavators are sunk in oblivion, yet their work remains a vital testimony to the faith from which it sprang. The stupendous temples of the Pharaohs degenerate into emblems of self-aggrandizement when compared with the Kailash at Ellora. That their names should go down to posterity—this was the ambition of the rulers of Egypt when they planned their tremendous structures. Very different were the motives which impelled the sculptors at Ellora to persevere with their labour of love. To them, work was a consecration, and in the faithful execution of their tasks they found all-sufficient reward. Devotion was the secret of their strength.

The Kailash at Ellora is hewn vertically out of the heart of the rock, and it is almost incredible that mortal hands

could have accomplished so remarkable a feat. Human determination and ingenuity alone, however, are responsible for the creation of this glorious monument. Begun probably in the eighth century A.D., the work of excavation must have occupied over one hundred years, for it was necessary to quarry about three million cubic feet of rock. The master masons excavated a huge pit, two hundred and seventy-six feet long by one hundred and fifty-four feet wide, with a scarp one hundred and seven feet high. The temple area of the Kailash, the world's greatest rock poem, would accommodate the Taj Mahal, the marble dream of Shah Jehan at Agra.

In the centre of the Kailash excavation a solid mass of rock was left standing, which the workmen transformed into a complete double-storeyed temple. The exterior decorations, consisting of gigantic statues of elephants, lions, griffins, etc., feeding, tearing each other, or trampling on their victims, are suggestive of the creatures of Conan Doyle's "Lost World."

The French traveller, Monsieur Thevenot, who visited Ellora in 1667, was the first European to attempt a description of the caves. He was amazed at the beauty of what he called the "Pagods of Ellora," and mentioned the local tradition, which he learnt at Aurangabad, that "all these Pagods great and small with their works and ornaments were made by giants." Referring to the Kailash, he wrote: "Everything there is extremely well cut, and it is really a

wonder to see so great a mass in the air, which seems so slenderly underpropped that one can hardly forbear to shiver at first entering into it."

And the whole thing was done with the simple chisel. And the Brahmans and the Jains took up the work where the Buddhists left it.

Here only did the art of fashioning in the living rock a huge mansion more than one storey high, with doors, windows and staircases, attain its zenith. The Do Thal (two-storeyed) and the Tin Thal (three-storeyed) represent a stupendous expenditure of energy and skill. The work is thought to have been begun at the top and continued downwards. The upper storey is more elaborately carved than the ground-floor chambers as if the enthusiasm had evaporated before the task could be completed, or something had happened to interfere with the work. We can picture Kipling's Lama, with his chela, Kim, at his feet, and the drawing of the wheel of life stretched on the ground before him. So cleverly are the caves planned that nearly all the temples have courtyards and curtain walls in front, which must have contributed towards the security and privacy of the monks who lived in retirement, shut off completely from the outside world, free to concentrate upon their studies and their devotions. At night they bolted and barred the doors of their retreats, and thus protected themselves against attacks from wild beasts, their only neighbours.

When I had got to the Carpenters' cave, I was fortunate

in being joined by two guides, one being the Curator. They pointed out the best features of the whole wondrous series. This cave is purely Buddhist, with wild, free animals running to hear the preaching of Buddha. It is so called because it has the appearance of a wooden building which has become petrified. It is also suggested that it served at one time as the guild-hall or meeting-place of the master-workmen employed in constructing the so-called " caves."

I like to think of the artist-monks in the cool of the early evening, brushes and palettes laid aside, conversing with one another about the day's work while they paced the galleries.

One by one they would show their sketches, and commune together in low voices of their hopes, their fears, their technical difficulties, their ambitions for the progress of the great work. And then amongst the group appears the Master, a calm, white-robed figure of tranquil brow, with wistful, rather weary eyes. He looks at the drawings and speaks a word, here of sober praise, there of exhortation to further diligence, perhaps now and then a syllable of gentle reproof. . . . Lastly, he turns to his brother artists, and utters only the Ineffable Name.

Cave No. 21 is called the Rameshwara. It is purely Shivite, containing a giant figure of the Dancing Shiv. Opposite this is a giant skeleton of the dead Shiv. This represents the two sides of life, its joy and its sorrow. And here, Shiv and Parvati play chess at their marriage ceremony.

At all seasons of the year Cave 29, known as "Sita's Bath," is deliciously cool. Near it flows a beautiful stream, and during the monsoon a waterfall may be heard as it discharges into the gorge below.

Cave No. 31 is a miniature Kailash, made by Jains. It contains giant elephants, elephant terraces, and rich paintings on the roof and walls.

The whole hill is covered with aloe candelabra as though in honour of the Great God, who in the West is worshipped as the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Ghost. In the East he is held as the greatest of the Three, for Bramah (the First Person) soared up for a day and could not reach the limits of His flame.

Twelve years ago an ascetic lived on the hill, where there are three hundred caves. When disturbed he disappeared. God only knows how long he had been there.

The wondrous semicircle of Ellora is a silent witness to that Force which only a fool ignores. The fool has said in his heart, there is no God. Salisbury Cathedral, whose architect is also unknown, is the same, but the builders of Salisbury had all the resources of Western machinery to help them; these Eastern devotees had nothing but their hands and eyes.

Around Ellora there always hangs a chastened and appropriate quietness. But the still hour is that when the caves are plunged in the shadows of approaching twilight; when the hill-crests only are lit with flame. The

monkeys have long since withdrawn to their rest. A single vulture stoops for a moment over the abyss, wheels, and seeks her eyrie in the unscalable crag above. The mists curdle and become denser in the valley—the night seems to lift herself visibly from her bed, upon purple pinions. It is a moment when Nature seems hushed in tremorous expectancy : and now for a brief second the Past and Present will surely join hands.

We lean upon the parapet, and the air is filled with rustlings as remote as the voice of thought itself; delicate phantasms shape themselves in our consciousness. Oh! to be one with all this oneness, to catch a syllable of Truth from the voices that environ. A single star—the emblem —brightens overhead. Lean low—lower yet, until the beating of that deathless heart shall quicken our souls. For this is India's hour, and—Hush ! She speaks.

Seated in a cave as I watched the sun setting, its light hung like a great ruby and the river gleamed like a dagger blade of jade. As I looked I heard in my inner consciousness the words " Majesty and Power."

Old Carlyle has told us that sincerity is more powerful than originality. This is the secret of Ellora, as it was of the wondrous outpouring for three centuries at Florence, which has since shut up like a box. The old Buddhist Masters had no use for the word " Self," any more than he who designed Salisbury. Their anonymity is sufficient evidence of that.

They painted what *they* liked, and so *we* like their paintings.

They depicted what *they* thought and so *we* like their way of thinking.

They drew what *they* saw, and so *we* like their point of view.

They invented at least one motive in draperies which I have never seen anywhere else; I mean the long ribbon-like appendages which whirl and flutter.

The colour scheme of the Ellora Valley is pitched in the primaries—in a rich and splendid pattern of colour laid on with full brush. We progress from wonder to wonder as we go deeper into a world where energy seems to become focused and effective. Every pool we cross is swarming with little darting fishes, over whom hover dragon-flies of a full orange-vermilion. Every tree traces a vigorous indigo shadow; every crag is forceful in the severe and unfuddled definition of its blue fissures and amber convexities. The valley is said to teem with serpents, almost as numerous as those which infested the Vale of Diamonds discovered by the redoubtable Sindbad; the wild boar leads his sows and their progeny through the brake, defying with his tusks even the general enemy—the panther; and the monkey-people dwell here. The caves are the very heart of the system, pulsating life, Nature herself.

It is as though the Buddhist Masters had freely poured out upon their warm and rosy creations the very life-blood

of their veins. In such haste were they to beautify, that long before a cave was finished the paintings were in progress in the completed portions, and the architects planned, the sculptors chiselled, the artists plied their brushes at one and the same time.

The temples and their inmates, the glen and its denizens, the cliffs and the stream were all linked in a sympathetic bond. All life is one, and the old monks did not shrink from the closest contact with their feathered and furred kinsfolk of the jungle.

So we have silhouettes of mighty elephants, next to impressions as delicate as Dakka muslin. We catch more than a glowing hint of the art that had even at that date wheedled the secret out of Mother India that all Life is One.

Also, the Orient first discovered Line, as Europe discovered Tones. It is Line that depicts the Buddha in his sublime reverie, that defines the girth of elephants, and the fierceness of lions, that flickers over flowers and plants, undulates over the bosoms of women, and twists and models a thousand incomparable items of decoration.

India's Line is the golden clue to India's art.

Let us pause as we leave Ellora. Look at that buffalo and her calf, both almost submerged in the water. On the flat rocks close by, the women are washing their clothes, having girded up their loins in true Biblical style. Their saris blaze under the meridian sun with facets of emerald, ruby and amethyst. Watch this woman passing us with stately

THE EIGHTH WONDER OF THE WORLD.

carriage. Astride of her hips sits a bronze cherub. The little creature wears silver armlets; its uncovered curls are sunbeam-strewn as with spangles. The girl carries her child just as the mother did in the cave fourteen hundred years ago.

She is ankle-deep in the amber current. The rose and purple and orange of her sari, the silver triangles at the elbow-joints, the pendants and the braiding of her blue-black tresses, are veiled by the golden rain of the sun. Now a yoke of creamy oxen approaches.

When we left the Shrines, a fine rain was falling. The crag where lives the panther, who startles the village dogs into chorus at night, looked very bleak and grim. Glancing backward, the now familiar outlines appeared blurred and grey. Ellora had donned her veil again. But there dwells everlasting song in the hearts of those who have been suffered once to look upon her face.

As we got into the motor to return to the guest-house, the Curator picked a flower for me. It is a little bright gamboge flower, with white petals. It is said that this flower was grown by Satyabhama in her garden, and was coveted by Rukhmini, Queen of Heaven. Krishna immediately gave Rukhmini a whole garden full of these flowers. It is called "Har Singour." It sweetens the month of January at Ellora, where it blooms in profusion. The Hindus say that the plant is the guardian of the caves, whose miraculous preservation is due to it. This tiny flower guards those mighty elephants. They are permanent records of

three successive faiths which in their day galvanized their Motherland into life, Buddhists, Brahmans and Jains. Came the apostle of a fourth, and this was his method of propaganda.

Father Roberto de Nobili was a famous Jesuit missionary who worked in this part of India from A.D. 1607. There have always been two schools of missionary policy: that which would have the convert break off contact, to the fullest possible extent, with his pre-Christian life, customs, family and people; the other that would make the change, externally at least, as small as possible. The latter makes conversion easier, but is the more subject to backsliding; and though both can claim Scriptural authority, the other seems the stronger. Roughly, the former is the policy of Protestant missions; the latter is the usual Roman Catholic policy; the Jesuits have always specially favoured it; their methods are flexible, and their high intellectual standard has made them appreciative of the many points of resemblance between their own beliefs and those of Hindus, Buddhists and Aztecs. De Nobili was thorough in his methods. He described himself as a Roman brahman; he held no public intercourse with Europeans or with Pariahs; he admitted none but brahmans to his service; he ate no food but that cooked by brahmans; he assumed the thread of the twice-born, and he dressed as a Sannyasi. That he forged the fourth Veda, lost till then, is probably a calumny, but he seems to have relied on it as evidence of his divine commission. "The method followed by Father de

Nobili," says Father Heras, "was the only one which ever met with success among the high castes of India." To this day Indian Roman Catholics claim to be, and are generally regarded by Hindus as, the highest of what appear to them to be the various Christian castes.

The inscriptions of Karli Cave, near Poona, are so inspiring* that I searched the dusty volumes of the Bombay Gazetteer, in the Asiatic Library of Bombay, for more at Ellora, as I personally believe that Ellora was, and still is, an even more powerful centre of occultism than Karli; it was disappointing to find the names were only those of the dynasty of kings and their conquests.

* *Vide* "The Voice of the Orient."

THE MYSTERY OF SIVAJI

SIVAJI, to whom the Prince of Wales unveiled a monument at Poona, drew his inspiration from Ellora, where he worshipped and became one of the greatest leaders of men the world has ever known. His fame is, however, little known in the West. Therefore it is meet that, having visited Ellora, his Mother's Heart, I should write a few details of her most famous son.

Over two and a half centuries ago—in the year 1646, to be precise—a travel-stained band of men entered the courtyard of the Royal Palace of Bijapur, a city with which the fates have dealt hardly, and which to-day is little more than a ruin. But at the time of which we are writing Bijapur was the capital of a large and important kingdom in the southern portion of the peninsula, and was inhabited by a brave and warlike people.

The men dismounted from their shaggy mountain ponies and looked about them curiously. It was evident that they had come from afar, for their hair was long and matted, and their speech rough and uncouth ; and the splendidly dressed officer of the guard, who had been eyeing them with suspicion,

mentally decided that they were Marathas, or tribesmen who lived in the wild hilly country in the far west.

"Behold, we bear important tidings!" they cried. "We must see His Majesty Muhammad Adil Shah."

When they were at length admitted, the monarch, in the presence of a brilliant court, asked them their business.

"We have come to tell Your Majesty that Sivaji, son of Shahji, has taken the fort of Torna."

A murmur of surprise and incredulity went the round of the assembled courtiers, but the King, raising his hand to command silence, bade the messengers continue their narrative.

"May it please Your Majesty," they resumed, "our lord Sivaji has been troubled in his mind since many days. Long has he considered with sorrow that the fort was not maintained in a manner befitting the safety of the country. But now, zealous of Your Majesty's glory, he has deposed the Governor and vested himself with the authority of this miserable one."

"How say you?" interrupted the King. "This is Shahji's son?"

"Even so, Your Majesty. We humbly pray you to look with favour upon our master Sivaji, that by your royal approval of a patriotic deed you may strike terror into the hearts of those base ones who seek to stir up the kingdom into sedition and revolt."

The King plucked uneasily at his beard. "Shahji," he

muttered to himself—"Shahji, the powerful noble and general in command of the Bijapur army! How came his son thus to take the law into his own hands?"

"Tell me," he commanded sternly, "how old is this capturer of forts?"

"Your Majesty, he is but nineteen years."

The king's brow cleared, and a broad smile passed round the court. What manner of youth was this who seemed so anxious for his country's welfare? Certainly it was not a matter to be taken seriously. So the messengers were dismissed with the promise that their petition should receive attention at a later date, while the courtiers smiled to themselves over what they considered a very excellent joke.

This is the first glimpse we have of the renowned Sivaji. A Hindu boy, of martial spirit and keen imagination, fed from his earliest years on the wonderful exploits achieved by the legendary heroes of India, burning to follow in their steps and to do noble deeds for his country and his religion, we see him, in company with a few boyish friends and a ragged band of low-caste natives, capture an important fort. The tried men of war surrender in astonishment to these inexperienced youths, while the aged Governor delivers up his sword in mute dismay. Sivaji has placed his foot on the first rung of the ladder of fame.

The youthful hero lived with his guardian at Poona. The old man was very much shocked by his ward's daring actions, but his lectures and entreaties made no impression;

the spirit of adventure was in Sivaji and he would not be restrained. The aged tutor took to his bed in despair, and shortly afterwards died. On his death-bed his dying eyes seemed to see something of the future in store for the boy, for he called him and bade him go on as he had begun.

"My son," he murmured with faltering accents, "I pray that you will continue your campaign for independence. Protect brahmans, kine and cultivators; preserve the temples of the Hindus from violation, and follow the fortune which lies before you." And so saying, the old man expired.

In 1659, Bijapur sent an expedition against him, "the boy bandit" of the mountains, who had captured treasure sent by the Governor of Kalyan to Bijapur. The powerful army was accompanied by a Brahman, who was sent as envoy to Sivaji, the Hindu leader. He knelt at the Brahman's feet, weeping and saying his only aim was to restore Hinduism. The Brahman blessed him and brought about an interview between him and the haughty general of Bijapur. Sivaji treacherously killed him and routed the whole powerful army.

For some time Sivaji thought wistfully of the riches of Surat, and when Sivaji gave himself over to thought something usually happened. One day the wealthy merchants in the Moghul seaport found their town surrounded by four thousand men, all armed to the teeth, and led by the redoubtable Maratha chieftain. The strangers did their work leisurely, but well. For four days the city permitted

itself to be plundered, and then the Marathas took their departure, bearing with them many elephants and camels richly laden with booty. It was at Surat that Sivaji discovered he was not invincible. He found the English factory barricaded and placed in readiness for a siege, for the stubborn Englishmen were disposed to yield their treasure to no one. Sivaji was mildly surprised by this show of resistance, and brought his whole strength to bear upon the tiny fort; but the garrison stuck grimly to their task, and for once in his life Sivaji had to acknowledge himself beaten. He had, however, the satisfaction of capturing one Englishman, and to him he gave an object-lesson in Eastern methods. The poor fellow was led before Sivaji in a great state of mind, for he fully expected to be chopped into little pieces. He found the famous outlaw seated in a tent outside the town ordering the heads and arms of prisoners to be cut off. But it must not be supposed that Sivaji was naturally cruel or vindictive. He resorted to such violence only when he suspected his prisoners were deceiving him and concealing part of their possessions. While the frightened Englishman watched, expecting his turn to come every minute, a wretched Jew was dragged into the tent.

"Come now," said Sivaji, "tell me where you have buried your hoards and you shall be released." The man obstinately refused. At a sign from their master two swarthy Marathas flung themselves upon their captive

and forced him to his knees, while another held a gleaming dagger within an inch of his throat. Still the unhappy creature refused to speak. Three times the question was repeated; three times the knife grazed his lean and scraggy neck. Then Sivaji leaned back and laughed. "Surely," he quoth, "only a Jew would set a greater value upon his goods than upon his life. Let the man go free."

To the mighty Aurangzeb at Delhi tales were brought of the "Mountain Rat's" audacious exploits. To these the Emperor would listen grimly, vouchsafing little remark. But one day came news which probed even his indifference, and made the ruler of millions feel as angry as the lowest of his subjects. For the one vulnerable part of Aurangzeb was his religion, and that no man might wound with impunity. He learned that Sivaji, with a powerful fleet, was plundering the rich Mohammedan pilgrims as they journeyed to the sacred city of Mecca, and he swore that once and for all the infidel should be exterminated. Sivaji, however, did not accompany his men upon these naval excursions, except upon one occasion, when he was so violently seasick that he vowed never more to trust himself on the water.

Once again a large army marched southwards.

Sivaji went to Delhi to propitiate Aurangzeb, who appeared in all his glory of pearls, seated on peacock throne, to subdue him.

It seemed to be Aurangzeb's purpose to do everything

possible to humiliate his visitor and to overwhelm him with the power and grandeur of the Moghul Empire. Sivaji was kept waiting three months at Delhi before the Emperor would give him audience. When at length a day had been appointed for the Maratha to be presented at court, Aurangzeb made great preparations to impress him with his own magnificence. It was his usual custom to dress very simply, but now he caused himself to be arrayed in his most splendid garments. Strings of dazzling jewels hung round his neck, whilst diamonds and rubies of great size glistened and shone from his turban. Seated upon the radiant, gem-encrusted peacock throne, he was a magnificent sight—calculated (as he thought) to strike awe into the heart of any man.

What a brilliant spectacle an audience in those splendid halls must have been! Can one not imagine the great throne, mounted on a high dais and glittering with a thousand points of light—the Emperor, sparkling from head to foot with jewels, haughtily surveying the assembled courtiers—the golden platform whereon the great nobles stood in all their gorgeous attire—the other platforms of silver and marble thronged by the lesser nobles in order of their rank? It is difficult in these prosaic days to conjure up in our minds such scenes of Oriental splendour.

In the midst of all this magnificence, Sivaji held a haughty head—and nursed a burning heart. If Aurangzeb thought to tame his fiery spirit by such parade of pomp

and circumstance, he was mistaken. Sivaji found himself admitted to the gold platform, but he also found himself placed at the very bottom of the long row of attendant nobles, and at this fresh humiliation his anger overflowed. He saw his hopes of the Viceroyalty dashed to the ground, he realized that Aurangzeb was trifling with him, and his indignation, which had been smouldering for months, broke forth tempestuously.

Out of the glittering ranks he stepped—a short, spare figure with flashing eyes and fierce gesture, and in ringing tones addressed his reproaches to the Emperor. No one dared to stem the torrent of his wrath as he voiced his bitter resentment at the manner in which he was being treated.

Aurangzeb listened in stony silence; once only, when the furious Maratha chief accused the courtiers around him of cowardice and servile adulation, did he permit the ghost of a smile to flicker across his thin lips. The outburst was soon over, and Sivaji swung angrily out of the chamber. Aurangzeb gave orders that he should be admitted to no more audiences. He further commanded that a guard should be set about his house, which he should not be allowed to quit without an escort responsible for his safe custody.

Thus did Sivaji find himself a prisoner. His faithful soldiers were allowed to return to their own country, and he and his young son were left alone in his enemy's capital. Aurangzeb was happy, for he thought he had the Maratha

completely in his power. They brought him news that his prisoner was sick—almost at the point of death. The Emperor was indifferent; sick or well, the "Mountain Rat" could do little harm at Delhi. But after a while the invalid grew better. You will remember that Sivaji was a pious Hindu, so that it was only natural that he should send thank-offerings of fruit and flowers and other things to the Brahmans and nobles of his acquaintance. The most curious part of these gifts was the baskets in which they were packed. They were long and slender, and bore a remarkable resemblance to coffins; but after some weeks the guard stationed outside his house became quite accustomed to the sight of these unwieldy-looking packages.

One evening a strange thing happened. Sivaji, who was supposed by all to be still weak and ill, jumped out of bed in surprisingly active fashion, and proceeded to tie up his son in one of the coffin-shaped baskets. This being done, he put himself into another one, and was borne by his servants out of the house, through the cordon of soldiers outside, along the crowded thoroughfares, to a distant part of the city. There horses were awaiting them, and the wily Maratha—whose illness had been nothing more than a hoax—succeeded in escaping unobserved from the capital. Once outside the gates, they put spurs to their horses, and set out in hot haste for the Deccan. Great was Aurangzeb's wrath the following day when a trembling officer told him the story of the ruse. But by

that time pursuit was out of the question, and in December, 1666, after nine months' absence at Delhi, Sivaji, in the guise of a pilgrim, once more set foot in his own dominions.

The crowning point in Sivaji's career was, figuratively as well as literally, his coronation. In his extraordinary life he had never looked back on good fortune; year by year his power and prestige had steadily increased, and now he was no mountain robber, but a ruler holding sway over a vast territory and governing a mighty people. He had long struck coins in his own name and styled himself Rajah and Maharajah. It would be a fitting climax, he thought, to declare his independence, and set up a new dynasty and a new kingdom.

And so, on June 6, 1674, Sivaji was solemnly crowned. The Maratha leader had not forgotten what he had seen at Delhi, and the function was carried out with an amazing wealth of pomp and circumstance. When at length the ceremony was over, the newly crowned "Ornament of the Kshattrya race, Lord of the Royal Umbrella, and King of the Marathas," was weighed against gold, as was customary on such occasions, and the gold distributed among the Brahmans. These gentlemen were very much disappointed to find how little Sivaji weighed, for he was a small, spare man, without a superfluous ounce of avoirdupois!

On the fifth day of April, 1680, in the fifty-third year of his age, there passed away one of the greatest leaders of men the world has ever seen. For despite his faults, which

were many, Sivaji must go down to history as a great man and a great genius.

Himself an enthusiast, he had in addition that rare faculty—the quality of inspiring enthusiasm in others. When we consider how he embarked upon his adventurous career with a mere handful of half-naked Marathas, how he had to contend with innumerable difficulties, yet never let himself be dismayed by adversity, and how finally he founded a power which was destined mightily to affect the history of India, and which actually became our own immediate predecessor in conquest, we cannot withhold from him our tribute of the deepest admiration.

Aurangzeb heard of the death of his most formidable enemy with great gladness. Yet though he affected to despise Sivaji during his lifetime, in death he paid him a generous compliment. "He was," he said, "a great captain, and the only one who has had the magnanimity to raise a new kingdom, while I have been endeavouring to destroy the ancient sovereignties of India; my armies have been employed against him for nineteen years, and nevertheless his state has been always increasing."

Aurangzeb died in a tent at Ahmednagar.

In 1683 he set out to conquer the South. An enormous army, a tent like a palace, accompanied him. He reigned from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. He conquered the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golconda. The Marathas were led by Sivaji's son, Sambaji, who loved ease, wine and women.

Aurangzeb received news one day that Sambaji had taken up his residence at a small village not far from the Imperial camp. Calling one of his favourite officers to him, he bade him go and bring the "insolent rebel" back a prisoner. "By the beard of the Prophet," cried the enraged Emperor, "I shall never return to Delhi until I have seen the head of the Maratha weltering at my feet!"

Meanwhile, the unsuspecting victim was engaged in one of his usual orgies. Suddenly a loud tumult was heard outside. Then a messenger, breathless with running, rushed frantically into the room and threw himself at his master's feet.

"The Moghuls," he cried—"the Moghuls are upon us! Flee, Your Majesty; flee ere it be too late!"

Flushed with wine, the Maratha staggered to his feet.

"What do you mean, you dog?" he shouted angrily. "Away, or you shall be beaten for your presumption. How dare you bring such a ridiculous story into my presence!"

Hardly were the words out of his mouth when another messenger burst into the room.

"They are surrounding the house," he gasped. "Flee, Your Majesty! In another minute escape will be cut off!"

"Are they all mad?" roared the infuriated monarch. Then a jingle of steel was heard outside, and a party of Moghuls broke into the apartment. The foremost slashed fiercely at the Maratha king with his sword. Sambaji's

favourite courtier rushed in and received the blow. Then Sambaji himself was secured, and, mounted on a camel, was conveyed in triumph back to the Moghul encampment. There was great excitement throughout the camp when it was known that the redoubtable Maratha chieftain had been captured. An immense multitude flocked to see their dread enemy being brought a helpless prisoner through the Moghul lines. The banging of drums and clashing of cymbals heralded the approach of the procession, and a loud fanfare of trumpets announced the joyful tidings throughout the innumerable tents which dotted the plain as far as the eye could reach. Seated on his throne, amid a crowd of glittering nobles, Aurangzeb surveyed his prisoner with a contemptuous smile.

"Little as you deserve mercy," he said, "yet in our great magnanimity we will consent to spare your life. But you must renounce your religion, trample upon your gods, and cry aloud before the multitude, 'There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his Prophet!'"

Something of the fierce spirit of Sivaji leapt up in the Maratha's heart as he heard these haughty words. Drawing himself up to his full height, and gazing proudly around, he hurled all the curses and abusive epithets at his command at the name of the sacred Prophet.

"Shall I, King of the Marathas, become a Mussulman?" he cried. "Not if you were to give me your daughter's hand in marriage!"

Insult could no farther go. For once in his life the dignified Aurangzeb lost command of his temper. "Drag the blasphemous dog from our presence!" he roared. "He shall suffer for this insolence."

The fate of the unhappy Sambaji was a terrible one. Every torture human ingenuity could devise was heaped upon him ere death put an end to his sufferings. His eyes were seared out with red-hot irons, his tongue was torn from his throat, and then—after enduring agony unspeakable—his head was finally struck from his shoulders. Thus did Aurangzeb wreak his revenge upon the Marathas.

This was like the murder of Edith Cavell, a great stupidity. The Marathas broke up the army of the Great Moghul. Aurangzeb died at ninety. He lies in a plain, simple tomb at Aurangabad. He had destroyed the greatest Temple Empire the world has known in his efforts against the greatest spiritual force in the world, the Hindu religion.

Ellora is its greatest centre, even to-day in the West, as Benares is in the East of India.

Akbar had founded his dynasty. Shah Jehan was the greatest of the Moghuls. Aurangzeb destroyed their line. He thought he had conquered Hinduism when he erected his spindly minarets on the Ganges. Still more, poor blind mole, when he planted his mosque on the site of the old Bisheshwar, the heart of Hinduism, which was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, as long as the planet lasts.

The Sikh leader Banda, defending his faith to the last against the fanaticism of Aurangzeb, saw his child butchered before he was torn to bits by hot pincers.

But Nadir Shah, like Sivaji, risen from a shepherd's hut, avenged the lot. He swooped from the north, carried away the peacock throne and all it stood for. He deluged Delhi in blood. The star of the East was set. But out of the West came the pale faces. Another victim had seen in a vision a mightier power built on its departed glory, a greater empire, the envy of the nations of the world.

Leaving Daulatabad behind, one soon discerns the minarets and domes of Aurangabad, some eight miles to the south, peeping out of the green foliage. From a distance it looks like a garden city. So, indeed, it once was, though now it is but the ghost of its former self. Its grandeur disappeared with the death of Aurangzeb.

Aurangabad means, of course, Aurangzeb's town. Despite that name, it had existed for centuries before he set foot in it. Originally, the small village of Khirki, Malik Ambar had made it his capital, and his son, Fateh Khan, had renamed it Fatehnagar. Aurangzeb called it after himself when he made it his headquarters in the Deccan, during the years he, as his father's (Shah Jehan's) viceroy, and later as Emperor, fought to extend the Moghul Empire, his imagination stirred by dreams of conquest more compelling than any which had whetted the ambition of his forefathers. Here he loved with fiery passion in his youth, when his eye could

see beauty and colour. Here he turned an anchorite in his old age.

Judging from what remains of Aurangzeb's palace, there was nothing particularly attractive or imposing about it from the architectural point of view. Situated on a lone high terrace, the grounds enclosed by the walls surrounding it covered nearly the whole area between the Delhi and Mecca gates of the city.

In the balcony of the mosque attached to the palace Aurangzeb used to sit, clad in pure white, copying verses from the Koran, which he sold, living upon the proceeds. He believed that no man should depend upon the labour of others, but should live by his own toil; and he refused to spend upon himself any money which he had not earned with his own hands.

Within a short distance of the Imperial palace are the ruins of the residences in which the courtiers lived. They, needless to say, did not agree with the Emperor in regard to leading the simple life.

In a suburb of Aurangabad lies entombed the fair form of the Begum Rabbia Daurani, who captured and held Aurangzeb's heart when young blood coursed through it. It was built by her son, the Prince Azam Shah, and was meant to be an exact replica of the Taj Mahal at Agra.

The builders of the two mausoleums were grandfather and grandson, but two generations removed from each other. Yet how tawdry looks the tomb above Aurangzeb's favourite

wife when compared with the structure at Agra which Shah Jehan erected across the bend of the river Jumna from his palace in the Fort, where he could gaze upon the last resting-place of the beautiful Mumtaz Mahal, who had been his beloved wife and companion. In place of the marble of the Taj at Agra, iridescent as a pearl under changing atmospheric conditions, the Bibi Ka Maqbara, as the tomb at Aurangabad is called, was plastered over with chunam (lime plaster) and ornamented with stucco.

This fake has become bedrabbled from the action of wind and weather. The imitation, in any case, lacks the fragile grace and ethereal beauty of the original. It has the form but not the soul of the Taj Mahal.

When the Moghul garden round the Bibi Ka Maqbara received constant attention, that mausoleum must have stood out like a white cameo cut on a jade foundation. But now drought has seared the garden. Many of the cypresses have died, leaving unsightly gaps. The grass and shrubbery have become withered, dun, and dusty. The flowering plants have languished and died.

Of the gardens for which Aurangabad was famous, sufficient remains to enable one to visualize what they were in the height of their glory. Water spouted into the air from numerous fountains, escaping from apertures cut in irregular shapes, so that silver showers descended in many curious forms. Some discharged water in all directions at once. From others it rose slowly, in graduated columns which

THE TRIUMPH OF THE EGG AT NIGHT.

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became convex or concave in ascending or formed a translucent curtain.

In Aurangzeb's time, and even long before that, in the days of Malik Ambar, the water was supplied from a huge reservoir, miles away from the city, in the heart of the hills not far from Daulatabad, which became filled during the monsoon with water running down from the mountains surrounding it. It was carried to the bed of a stream, dry during the best part of the year. Percolating through the sand and gravel at the bottom, it became filtered, and then found its way into a large aqueduct underground, which carried it to all parts of the city. Here and there in its course the water rose through high cement columns and poured out through spouts into cisterns, from which it was taken in pots as required.

The water which kept the gardens green and supplied the needs of peer and peasant was controlled from a central station by a mechanism as simple in construction and easy to regulate as it was effective. By pulling a wooden plug here and inserting it there, the flow of water could be shut off in one part of the city and diverted to another part.

A simple and ingenious method, but like all people who work on a large scale, the Moghuls were simple and effective. Waterworks are characteristic of Moghul architecture. On our bridal trip to Bijapur, fresh from Parsee fire-worshippers at Bombay, we saw their water tower of seven storeys, in which the water spouted from peacocks' mouths. Those old

Mohammedan warriors of the north knew the value of water in that awful climate; and he who was my companion, since fallen to that climate and his duty therein, said, "I am also a water-worshipper."

On the very day of our landing at Bombay, a memorial is being dedicated to Sivaji and a hymn to him appears in the local papers.

Aurangzeb destroyed the peacock throne. Sivaji was weighed against gold. In our bridal days at Poona, Sivaji's name was the war-cry for the Poona brahmans' war against the British. When the forest officer, Mr. Fagan, shot a native by mistake for a bear, the cry was, "What would Sivaji have said?" When Mr. Rand and Mr. Ayerst, the plague extinction officers, were murdered in our Government House procession, we may imagine Sivaji's name was conjured by the poor misguided boy who did it. He had been singing, in the temples, to Sivaji.

When Hindu story-tellers of the present day relate to enraptured audiences the wonderful exploits of Sivaji, they will tell how it came to pass that native Indian and white-faced Englishman first fought together on the shores of Hindustan. And if the story-teller be anything of a philosopher he may go on to declare that the English, by their successful resistance of Sivaji's attack—Sivaji who feared nobody and was feared by all (unless it be by the proud Aurangzeb, who called him a rat)—foreshadowed themselves the future masters of India.

THE MYSTERY OF THE INDIAN SISTINE

> Great God! I'd rather be
> A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
> So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
> Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
> Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea,
> Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.

All that man is or feels or (in what concerns him closely) thinks; all that he loves or fears or delights in, grieves for, desires and aspires to is to be found in it either expressed or implied. As for beauty, it is "excellent in beauty," and poetry dwells in it as light dwells upon a mountain and on the moss in the crevices of its rocks. In what other place are even natural objects made in the imagination so whole and fair; its stars, its well-springs, its war-horse, its almond-tree?

I STRONGLY felt that the account of Ellora's glorious half-moon of sculptures would be incomplete without an account of the equally gorgeous crescent of painting at Ajanta.

So after a night's rest at Daulatabad Dak, I once more sallied forth in the bone-shaking hired motor.

About a hundred miles from Ellora, as the crow flies, is another wondrous semicircle of caves in the Ghats. That of Ajanta. But whereas at Ellora the sculptures are mightiest, at Ajanta the paintings are the speciality.

It is at once the most ancient and the most priceless art heritage handed down to India of our day.

Some three centuries after Gautama the Buddha (Enlightened) had, about 525 B.C., discovered the way to escape

the suffering to which human flesh is heir, monks belonging to his faith selected this spot for their cloister. For a thousand years pious hands, driven by religious zeal, chipped with chisel and mallet and painted the living rock, spreading horse-shoe fashion round the basin of the mountain torrent, fashioning lofty, well-lit shrines and monasteries, opening off verandahs. To support the roof they left masses of rock, which they carved into pillars, and painted the walls with supreme skill with different coloured clays found on the spot.

The paintings are characterized by boldness of outline and broad sweep of brush. Emotions are portrayed with faithfulness, as if life were reflected in a mirror—sadness, pain, death-throes, love, sensuality, envy, fear, malice, avarice, mischief, joy, and sorrow, all being shown with a realism which powerfully moves the spectator. So great is the variety of subjects treated that it is almost impossible to conceive of a phase of life which has been overlooked.

The carvings and paintings possess great historical and sociological value. They portray almost every aspect of human activity, and, therefore, constitute a record of nearly every phase of life for a period of about a thousand years. One knows, after looking at some of them, how men and women who lived in ancient and mediæval India dressed and adorned themselves and arranged their hair; what sort of houses they dwelt in and how they were furnished; the vessels in which they cooked, their method of cooking, and

the dishes from which they ate ; the flowers and fruit placed before them ; the way in which they travelled by land and sea ; the animals and birds they kept as pets ; the amusements they enjoyed, the games they played, and the sports in jungle and field in which they engaged.

It is surprising to note how well the colours, made from materials locally gathered, have lasted through the centuries. Where they have become dark, in some places, it is the fault of modern painters who applied cheap varnish to bring out details for copying.

Lady Herringham took a party to Ajanta to reproduce the paintings. These included two Bengalis. The Hon. Mr. Watson accompanied the Governor of Bombay to see the caves. The police had strict orders to arrest all Bengalis in the vicinity. They arrested Lady Herringham's painters. She protested in anguish for their release. Her zeal outran discretion, for it was she who varnished the paintings.

A motor-road of sorts now exists from Ellora, so I was able to visit them and give personal impressions. After the terrible shaking and jolting of the journey, it was a toilsome climb up steps in the mountain-side to reach the caves, but my reward came the moment I saw the more than life-sized Buddha in Cave 1. It has been compared to those figures before whose genius Raphael stood aghast, flabbergasted, the figures of Michael Angelo in the Sistine Chapel at Rome. Even the Italian Professor Cecconi writes :

"In Cave 1, the colossal figure of Buddha, which is nearly

immune from varnish, evinces a surprising portrayal of art on account of its pictorial qualities; this painting in its grand outlines recalls to memory the figures of Michael Angelo in the Sistine Chapel; while the clearness of the colour of the flesh, so true to nature, and the transparency of the shadows, are very like those of Correggio. The design and breadth of the technique, the interpretation of the shape of the hand made to realistic perfection, permit of a comparison with the two great artists of the Italian Renaissance."

The main difference is that the Buddha wears an Indian head-dress like a jewelled mitre, Indian jewels, Indian features, and an expression of Indian peace instead of western struggle.

Mr. Axel Jarl, the Danish painter, whom I met in Benares, and who spent years painting in Indian temples, sometimes so huge that they were patrolled by elephants, writes:

"The water paintings in the rock caves at Ajanta exhibit the classical art of India. That is to say they represent the climax to which genuine Indian art has attained.

"Their technique, which reaches its climax in a Bodhisattva figure (of more than life-size in Cave No. 1), bears a striking resemblance to that of Michael Angelo. If one placed a good photograph of this Buddha head by the side of a photograph of a figure from the Capella Sixtina one might be inclined to think, if no attention were paid to the different types of the figures, that they were painted by the same master."

The situation of Ajanta is the best explanation of its

wondrous works. The men, who could conceive the idea of that tremendous scimitar of columned temples, athwart the face of the precipice, four furlongs from the boss of the hilt to the point of the blade, were Titans in conception and energy. But they finished like miniature painters.

The cliff sweeps downward to the valley in a double cascade of volcanic rock, topped with a soft curling spume of greenery, and vanishing into verdant brake and coppice below. This rock wave is punctured with the human eyries of the monks, fit habitations indeed for those soaring spirits. From the great half-moon gallery that connects the temples, one looks across the vale and serpentining river upon opposing crags. The crescent swings southward in its full curve, and is closed by a huge buttress of perpendicular rock, down a chasm of which the river tumbles in a light cascade.* The wave-like hills are here and there broken by tall splintered rocks that tower in stern contrast above the verdure. But this greenness has clung and crept, climbed and crawled, and at last conquered almost every cranny and crevice of the landscape. The greenness of Ajanta seems fraught with tenderness. It is love the beautifier who pressed a vernal kiss even on the forbidding lip of the precipice.

The temple walls of the monks vibrate with the life of the valley outside. They had but to leave their threshold in order to spy their models, and they observed these with the most tireless care, drew them with the keenest and most

* The cascade is dry in the hot weather.

loving skill. Their landscape is ever the jungle; the blunt rubber-like leaves of the palash tree fascinated them. They were using them as a constantly recurring decorative motive in their frescoes a thousand years before the Renaissance painters of Italy discovered the pictorial possibilities of bay and laurel. These panels are in the truest sense creative works because they are inspired by a passionate study of Creation.

The spirit of an all-pervading sympathy crept also into the souls of the artists, softening the stern rigours of the ascetic, wooing the most reason-bound philosopher and blossoming even in the hardest interstices of the human heart. They became imbued and governed by this law. It was their calling to be Painters, but it was this greenness in their hearts that made them Artists. So, though it has not often been given to man, those Artists were allowed by the Creator of the World they so admired to add a beautifying touch or two to His handiwork. They depicted the life of an age of Simplicity, the magnificent social economy of the jungle. Battles for existence, the triumph of the strong, the extinction of the weak—such are the proper combats witnessed by the basalt cliffs of Ajanta. As the colours are primary tints, so are the forces at play in this valley primary and elemental forces—shaming our subtleties and to this day standing as a strong corrective to our flaccid modernism. No wonder that the cave-makers and painters put vitality into their work. No wonder that the mural paintings at Ajanta

are among the most life-like paintings in the world to-day. The artists lived among realities—not artificialities.

Not until the visitor has ascended the steps carved in the mountain-side and begun to examine one chamber after another, does he realize the magnitude of the toil involved in creating them. Only hands inspired by a faith which refused to be daunted by the gigantic nature of the self-imposed task could have chiselled away hundreds of thousands of tons of rock in the days before explosives were invented.

It is not only the veneration due to age that we feel when we pause upon the threshold of the caves. We are held also by an awed expectancy. Who shall show us the way through the places we are about to enter? We can explain them, or we think we can; examine their form, and estimate their dimensions. But we are troubled by something unaccountable, inexplicable, something which, much as we long to do so, we shall never be able to grasp unaided, and we seek for some clue to lead us through the maze. There is no gentle Ariadne to place in our hands to-day that silken cord which guided her heroic lover through the Cretan labyrinth and led him back in triumph to her arms. King's daughters do no such kind offices for the men of this less deserving age. The clue, if we would find it, must be sought with patience by each individual.

The façade of some of the chambers is pierced above the door by a horseshoe arched window, and the ceiling is vaulted, producing a cathedral-like effect, the stone being

chiselled, at regular intervals, to form ribs looking like wooden rafters. In most cases, however, the ceiling has been left flat, and either painted with figures and scenes, or elaborately carved. The walls are covered with a profusion of statuettes and figures in bas-relief cut in rock, or are painted with a wealth of design. The carefully smoothed floors have holes here and there, made by the artists of old for grinding their colours.

The colour, the colour, and again the colour of Ajanta! Who can mistake these golden shrines for caves? Are they not rather nooks where Peris have nested? And the walls; have they not caught their rainbow hues from the brushing of ambrosial pinions? Let us, if the fetters of the world have left our souls at least free, shake off all fear and timidity in the face of Ajanta's wonders, and try if we cannot soar a flight with the artists. One of the best lessons taught us by those Buddhist artists is the lesson of Enthusiasm. There is nothing to be ashamed of in enthusiasm. It is a blessed gift. Enthusiasm can swing souls to overleap all obstacles. That the Ajanta paintings are the triumphs of enthusiastic spirits there can be no doubt—the same spirit that actuated the excavators in their incredible victories over the basalt cliffs buoyed up the painters.

The pictures of Ajanta take our hearts by storm because the artists never doubted their ability to captivate.

They had no doubt as to the value of their art, any more than they were light-headed through pride. They dwelt

neither among the excessive blandishments of popular applause nor the captious comments of interested critics. The artists of those days were quite undoubting as to the need to paint, and also as to their capacity.

These happy impulses of optimism are shot through the fibres of modern men across a gulf of fifteen or twenty centuries. How great then must once have been that battery whose surcharged forces are yet unspent and vitalizing! What must once have been the feast of colour, what the riot of line! There are figures seen in dim groups that yet retain, though hopelessly lost, a certain regality of outline; draperies and head-dresses that have their counterparts only a few miles away to-day.

I mean the long ribbon-like appendages which whirl and flutter, chase and encircle the beautiful people who wear them, and which are so fascinating and becoming that they might well be the rage of a modern ball-room.

The English artist, Mr. Griffith, writes:

"Great pains are lavished on the correct rendering of the manifold fashions of hairdressing. Sometimes it is frizzed in front with luxuriant ringlets, now unknown in feminine India. Or a chignon is tied at the back with a coronal of flowers over it, or large lotus blooms are arranged among its masses. Sometimes knots of hair are looped at the side of the head and adorned with flowers, while the still prevalent fashion of confining it with chains of woven wire or jewelled string, attached to elaborate ornaments of beaten work in

gold and silver, is often followed. Jungle women wear rolls and bands with peacock-feather tips, and no detail is traced with more care and skill in drawing than the arrangement of the various head-dresses."

Their method of using colour rather in bars than in masses is as effective as it is simple, and goes far to avoid the heaviness which so often distinguishes mural paintings; while their animals and plants, as faithfully copied as the rest, take an important but not excessive part in the graduated scheme.

Such are briefly most of the factors and their leading characteristics that the Ajanta Masters relied on for their beautiful results. To them tone values, as we understand them, were unknown: tone values would no doubt have tormented them as much as they did William Blake, who referred to Correggio as a "devil" for having confused the outline! If Blake could but have seen Ajanta, he would have found in it the country of his utmost dreams! For with all the simplicity of their materials and methods, the sincerity-loving Buddhists never failed to get the utmost out of them of which the mind of man is capable.

If the visitor has gone to Ajanta with the preconceived notion that he is to see dark and dungeon-like "caves," he will be surprised to find most of the chambers so constructed that a flood of light pours into them, more abundantly at some hours of the day than at others, for, since they are cut in a hill which is almost three-quarters of a circle in shape, the sun

shines into some of them in the morning and into others in the afternoon. Except for examining carvings and paintings towards the back of the chambers, it is not necessary to have artificial light; and one can even take photographs, if one so desires, without the aid of flashlight.

After four o'clock the sun visits the first and the second caves with his glow. Then is the time to see their treasures As the afternoon wears on, the old walls seem to awaken from slumber and to rouse and preen themselves with something of their former pride. Now, one by one, emerge in a kind of dark glory these forms that are poems, these colours that are melodies.

In addition to the wonderful Buddha in the Michelangelesque style, surrounded by his court, there is a panel in the first cave of a woman in anguish. I do not know the story, but she bends low before the King, whose sword is drawn to slay. The drawing of the figure is superb; the line of the back worthy of the pencil of Ingres. But more wonderful is the Art that at such a prodigious moment chose to conceal the face of Beauty. Only the bent head is seen above the outstretched hands—little sensitive hands that hover about, but do not venture to touch the feet of the inexorable destroyer. The impending doom is just; but how marvellously has the artist caused us to feel "the pity of it"! The guilt of the offender is forgotten in the contemplation of the awfulness of Beauty about to be destroyed. And this picture was painted in India nine hundred years

before Fra Bartolommeo painted his Magdalen embracing the feet of the dead Christ!

What a lesson on the inter-relation of the Arts we receive in the fourth cave, with its unfinished columns, its roughly sketched flooring, its walls only partially in being, yet already beginning to bloom with pictures. These were no "one art" men quarrelling for exclusiveness, but a band of brothers linked in the bonds of a joint mission. Scarcely did the sculptors of the splendid portals to the first and second caves lay down their tools when the painters were embellishing their dainty figures with all the wealth of colour at their command, gifting the stone with the hues of life. A beautiful and a fertile union is this marriage of the Arts at Ajanta, where Painting is no unhappy discarded child, but the legitimate offspring of fruitful wedlock.

The atmosphere of a supreme eld which seems to invest the whole of the Ajanta Valley clings most heavily about the ninth and tenth caves. The former is a low but beautifully proportioned temple, and were it not for the inevitable "stupa," its broad aisle and simple rows of unsculptured columns might suggest to one the interior of some Anglo-Saxon chapel. The tenth temple rears a mighty arch, cathedral-wise, to heaven, and as one gazes upwards between graceful columns at that buoyant vaulting, it is difficult to believe that we are merely in a pocket of the mountain, that the weight of Ossa presses overhead. Neither of these two oldest caves has any sculptured ornament, but they were

both filled at one time with frescoes. I prefer the design of these picture galleries of two thousand years ago to our modern Salons and Academies.

We see enough to know that these earliest walls once blazed with colour, life, beauty, that must have been, even in that dim period, the fruition of long years of pupilage and study.

Even in the ninth cave, ruined though the paintings be, one can see enough through the remaining fragments to realize that nearly two thousand years ago there was a very vigorous school of painting in India. As we make the circuit of the defaced walls, ghosts of the beautiful originals show a culture combining Religion, Painting and Sculpture in a manner never attained in Europe. They arrest us here and there. The silhouette of a mighty elephant; the glance of a dark eye beneath a just stroke of the perfect eyebrow; the jetty loop of a ringlet so purely classical that it might have been snatched from the tresses of the Hesperidean Girls, we catch more than a glowing hint of the art that had even at that date wheedled the secret out of Mother India. And we piece these Immortals of Art together, and we weave their minute but gleaming petals into the thread that shall conduct us to fuller knowledge.

In the sixteenth cave is a panel usually called "The Dying Princess." It shows the drooping form of a woman attended by other women, and the composition has a rhythmic flow of line that well conveys the poignant story. The unbound hair

of the Princess that hangs over her shoulder, contrasting with the elaborate head-gear of her attendants, was a good idea of the artist, for it serves to enhance the lines of lassitude. This woman is beautiful, like all the women of the Ajanta paintings. The needful expression is conveyed in the pose of the figure. That calm face the artist would not mar with unwanted realism, lest we should forget that we were onlookers of the most cruel of all human tragedies, the death of a beautiful woman. A very similar scene is treated quite differently in the seventeenth cave, where a Queen sick unto death reclines upon the broad and anxious breast of her royal husband. Here, too, the exquisite face, the lovely form are painted by the artist in all their rich perfections. To have sacrificed these essentials for a meretricious delineation of the ravages of illness or the agonies of approaching dissolution would have been to have sacrificed everything.

The same technique, a little more accomplished, occurs in the later pictures, and may be studied easily and at its best in the detail of the old brahman and his companions in the seventeenth cave. But long before this perfected bit of work, the artists had taken the clue in their hands, and when we pause in front of it, it is only because it is well, at this stage of progress through this Cnossus of Line.

The Indian Line is flexible, pliant and amazingly expressive. Though not capable of the modulations of the Japanese, or confinable within the disciplinary limits of the " synthetic art " of China, it is the master of both in forcefulness, in-

dependence and power of continuity. India's Line is the golden clue to India's Art. As to the crowded nature of the paintings, Indian legend is always crowded, and much had to be shown in most limited space. A survey of the famous Simhala "Jataka" of the seventeenth cave, shows how admirably the artist has arranged his pictorial narrative, keeping his great subject—the battle—with which to make a strong centre for his composition. These stories from the Life of Buddha are so-called. The story here referred to is a wild and fantastic legend of shipwrecked sailors and enchanted isles inhabited by the terribly beautiful Rakshasis, or vampires. These are symbolical of the brothers of the shadow, who ever impede the progress of the soul upward; the Ajanta frescoes are not more crowded than those of the Medici processions at Florence, considered by many to be the most interesting there.

There is nothing incongruous to these Indian artists in the peopling of palm grove or moonlit beach with the lovely or gamesome spirits of Hindu or Mohammedan legend.

Ajanta artists could adopt conventions for their Buddhas, and had their sacred symbols, and their orthodox attitudes; but their women are always unconventional. They did not pose women; they simply copied their poses. They were content to learn from their gestures; to portray their natures. Woman had for them a decorative value, altogether too precious to be ignored. They use women like flowers;

garlands of girls surround their Rajas and their Princes, embellish their palaces, dominate their street scenes, crowd the windows of their cities, and are often painted, as in the delicious panel in the first cave of the Queen and her maids giving alms to a mendicant, for the sheer joy of painting them, and with no perceptible literary or religious intention. When they do not weave their women into garlands, these artists scatter them as single blooms, or by twos and threes over the walls. As Apsaras or radiant Peris, they float across the porches; as Sirens they lure the sailor to his doom; but chiefly they shine for us as mortals, and as mortals these artists depicted them best, and most often; they painted them at the toilet, in repose, gossiping, sitting, standing, always with a sort of wonder akin to awe. Artists thought rightly in those days; and just as our Masters of Fiction are judged by general consent to prove their greatness according to their power of presenting women, so are they. For normal man, woman must always represent the most decorative element in the world. The Ajanta Masters use Woman as their best decorative asset with brilliant zest and extraordinary knowledge. Woman is the finest achievement of their art, and obviously its most admired theme. They cannot apparently have too much of her, and introduce her on every possible occasion, whether relevant to the story or otherwise, in every possible way, but under one aspect only—that of beauty. Their beauty was not diminished by laws. She was outside

the laws of Art, for she made them. They learned from her. They struggled to reproduce every turn of her head, every curve of her form, every glance of her eye. She enthralled them with her airs and graces, enmeshed them in the mysteries of her toilet, more strongly than does the Parisienne the painter of to-day. They produced tirelessly and with a discriminating knowledge her bewildering coiffures; they decked her in painstaking manner with the most beautiful trinkets they could devise. When they could not paint *Her*, then they painted her pearls and ornaments all round their columns. I can think of no parallel to this frank and chivalrous Woman-worship of Ajanta. Nowhere else, perhaps, has Woman received such a perfect and understanding homage. For the seventeenth cave there is a suggestion of dainty roguery about the scene where two bright-eyed girls peep through a lattice at the sequestered lovers, and the whole subject is drawn with a light hand and lighter heart. By the way, a similar lattice motive was used by Correggio for his Amoretti on the walls of S. Paolo at Parma, and was thought original. Most of the portals of the caves are sculptured with numerous reliefs of couples intensely interested in one another. They may be Gods and Goddesses, but they are most certainly lovers—and they are happy.

Perhaps that is Woman's chief function at Ajanta—to radiate happiness. We can never forget her; we wish never to forget her as we see her here. This purely objective

view of Woman, seen through the genius of Indian painters, is somehow consoling to us in an age of cubist art. Woman is here restored to us according to the Hindu ideal of woman, not deformed into a Medusa or an octopus, as in the Paris salons of to-day. Buddhism, of course, was only a revival of Hinduism, in which the one *essential* for a woman is purity. If she is beautiful and accomplished too, *tant mieux !*

Nowhere is Woman besmirched in the caves. I would add that she is nowhere degraded from the proud and prominent position she holds. I believe that for these Artist-Monks all Beauty was one, just as for them all life was one. There was no very great distinction, therefore, between Physical and Moral Beauty, not enough to make it necessary to remove their women more than a few inches from Buddha. In the lovely picture of the mother and child adoring Buddha in the seventeenth cave, the painter has dwelt with loving care upon every ringlet of the woman's hair, every exquisite feature, every curve of her supple form, as though he glorified Buddha himself by endowing his worshipper with so much loveliness. Woman always seems to confer as well as to deserve happiness. Equally with man she does homage to her Creator. And if the men seem more specially to present to Him the gifts of holiness, she offers in His sight His own incomparable dower of Beauty, and the offering is in no wise condemned by Him.

It is Woman the Sister that we see in these Religious

Panels. As the Beloved we see her also and often. Very beautiful are these Love scenes. In the first cave there is a fine composition of a Naga Sovereign and his Queen conversing happily together: the piquant upturn of the lady's face as she glances slyly at her Lord and Master, and the latter's look of tenderest affection have a lyrical sweetness. In the somewhat similar picture outside the seventeenth cave there is an air of sweetness and purity untarnished. These Artists of the Orient saw her and painted her as she shall, all things notwithstanding, ever be seen and painted; they clothed her as she shall ever be clothed in "Majesty and Power."

Criticism of these Cave-Paintings is unnecessary. No picture has ever been painted that cannot be destroyed by criticism if you set yourself down to do it. Such criticism of these paintings as I have read usually tries to prove that though comparatively good they are not so good as Chinese Art, and that they are crowded and lacking in balance and composition. But the indigenous art of India is a warm and glowing art, that throbs with life, colour and reality. It is of the heart rather than of the brain. It feels rather than reasons; it is joyous rather than austere; it deals with real scenes, real passions, real people, rather than with abstractions and conventions. Those old Buddhists believed what they painted, hence their frescoes blaze not only with the brilliance of beautiful but earth-bound spirits, but with the holier inner light of spiritual conviction. Sincerity

made the Art of Ajanta, as surely as sincerity made the Art of mediæval Florence. There is not the slightest doubt that the Buddhist Masters believed what they painted. I do not mean that they merely believed in the religious dogma which they illustrated, but that they believed in the canons of the Art. They were emphatically not experimenters: I have culled from the study of Buddhist art a renewal of faith; and standing before the works of the Buddhist artists have more than once exclaimed as did that other humble spectator of a masterpiece by Correggio: "And I, too, am an artist!"

Seated on the threshold of the seventeenth cave under the far-projecting caves of virgin rock, I gaze at the great cliff opposite, and bid farewell to what lies between and to these unknown master builders, painters and sculptors who have left there the world's greatest Eastern treasures to us. They would group themselves, I think, somewhere near the seventeenth cave (that with the wonderful view) and exchange with quiet interest the news of the day's work. This man would show, perhaps with a trace of pardonable exultation, his drawing of a rounded arm and shoulder, or a tinted study of a woman dressing her hair, and that other dark-skinned Beauty leaning in careless abandon against the pillar, as she has stood for far more than a thousand years; as she stands to-day in many a village of the Mahratta Land.

The glow that reanimates the paintings is but the very faintest revival of a past glory. It is no more than the

single tinselled star that remained to Hans Andersen's fir tree when its dream was past; yet it shows these surely sentient walls to be still what once they were, Aristocrats of Art. . . .

And all this was accomplished with five colours only—five colours—and a line!

Marvellously beautiful, and powerful, and great is the message of Ajanta that reaches our hearts straight from the first century.

In these caves we want no stereotyped art. We are nearer to something more vital, deeper, more moving: something that can set the blood racing in our veins. We want no other art than this. Give us as Art-lovers the vaulted studios of Ajanta; the good scent of the earth in our nostrils, the diapason of the living waters in our ears, and these pictures, fragments that seem tossed to us from Heaven, before our eyes!

And give us, too, that emerald of perpetual youth, that greenness of Ajanta, to lock within our hearts and keep for ever, knowing that certain is the reawakening.

THE MYSTERY OF THE SACRED HEART

So goes a London day,
  So fares the life we think.
O gold behind the grey,
  Drab undermined with pink,
What Gods are in our pay ?

You begin to discover England when you get aboard the boat-train at the Gare du Nord. Those voices, how adorably indescribably odd to the American ear ! It is, seemingly, your own tongue, yet it is said in the most delicious lifting and softness of intonation. As different from our lingo as English grass from American grass.

Most visitors succumb to the comfortable grace of England and accept it ; but Capek, with the poet's trouble in his mind, has tried to peer into that grace and see that she is enchanting because she is really betwiched. Here more than anywhere, I suppose, it was really doubtful whether men or fairies should have empire.—THE ROMANY STAIN.

The evening deepened. In the great empty garden the last rays of the sun fell on a bed of azaleas, shining through their fragile blossoms of lemon, apricot and pink. " The vague fragrance is life in this country," I thought. " It can awaken no wild longing. How different from the languorous perfumes of the East. Is it already over, the happiness of returning ? England seems pale and mild and grey. There are no ardours here, no tigers, no fanatics, no snows. Then again, as once before in that hot, moonlit station in India, there opened out a sudden ray of deliverance. A bubble of eternity had risen through time and held me for an instant in its shining teeth. I knew there was permanence : I felt reality. ' I shall find them again,' I said to myself, ' the flowers and jungles and huge beasts, where the pattern of these things eternally dwells.' "—FLOWERS AND ELEPHANTS.

THE RETURN

GOOD-BYE, India, for this incarnation. Good-bye! Good-bye! India with thy passion! Thy penance! Thine heights of heaven, thy depths of hell.

When Magic dies,
  Sometimes you hear
Under new skies,
  Desolate—clear—

The haunting echo
  Of an old tune
That set you dancing
  Under the moon—

Far—far away.
  If you are wise
You will not stay
  When magic dies.

Suez. The bright dainty light of the Mid East after the rich gorgeousness of the Real East. The white gulls powder the jade patches of the shallows in the aquamarine gulf. They have jade breasts reflected from the water. Far below is a lovely arc of a buried rainbow, as a gorgeous sea-snake in the depths. This is a miracle of refraction from the ship's pump up above.

Suez Canal Station. How jolly to see a carriage and pair of white horses again beneath the tamarinds and feel the gay French influence which permeates the Canal. This

is the last passing of twenty-four times of asking. Yet, ever new wonders appear in this mysterious water-passage between East and West.

Messina once more. Italy snow-capped, even Calabrian lemon groves frowning. Yes, but it's Europe once more to her battered children, hailing from hospital and jungle. And how lovely the pale blue line lying, like a valley of hyacinths, between the deeper blue of mountain and sea. And the seven Liparis all in differing blues. A world blue as Krishna. But presently the soft tints fade into a world of steel. The Seven Sisters become stern and rugged as women robbed of their sex rights. Stromboli becomes a scaly, slating monster, belching smoke. As we leave the Liparis and the smiling Southern seas we nerve ourselves for the stern world of the North and work.

Yet do we not enjoy their many twinkling smiles more because of that work, its agony and bloody sweat? Is not contrast the spice of life? Does not that grey island, so far up it always seems, returning, make their suns warmer food to fill us below? Does not its grind and travail make their *dolce far niente* more soothing? Do we not revel in their rest, we who give of our best, and live? Do they not die in their prime who fritter the hours away?

These seas are bright with an alien beauty; we have no share in them, and they repulse our overtures with the cold eyes of strangers. We can only enjoy the Mediterranean

as an experience outside ourselves—as a miracle, perhaps, but miracles are not the foundations of our ordinary lives. External loveliness is a poor substitute for friendship—and for friendship we must turn the nose of our boat homewards again. We must lounge along the jetties of our own harbours, we must look at the tumbling sea beyond our own breakwaters, and we must remember that our romance, our colour and our conquest have been made part of us by the ships which have limped into our own ports.

Remembering this, there is no harm in comparisons—but I, for one, am insularly content with the harbours I know best, with the men whose speech and ways I understand, and with the ships which represent to me the qualities and the traditions of my own race.

We are greeted by the cold chalky cliffs of Perfidious Albion, glimmering sharply in the northern clear-cut twilight, and the glamour of King Lear.

The white cliffs of Albion, furred with short turf in the pale evening light, are types of English temperament. Clean, cold, undefiled, but hard, uncompromising, unromantic, asking no compassion, showing no indulgence, even to her loyal children.

Yes, in many ways an unkind mother, a mother of matter-of-factness, unsentimental, stern as karma to our slips, unbending, of draughts, and of neuralgia, but our Mother still, a Mother of justice and of impregnable strength. To whose daughters, we who have passionately loved her

Empire, and have denied her nothing of our best, she has given life's greatest boon, her majestic recognition of our work in lands aloft the setting sun. What a sense of repose, of leisured security, even amid the din of customs! Comfortably ensconced in our carriage, a real English tea is brought by clean, fresh youths with delicious Cockney accents. Swiftly between the mossy banks of primroses are we borne to our Fleet Street, and our Bond Street.

All the beauty of London centres in Trafalgar Square, and in Ludgate Hill. All the best of life's endeavour is contained in the printing presses between the vats of the wine of our lives. We are cuddled to our Mother's heart. And our Mother is the Mistress of the World.

The bright emerald of the fig leaves over the soft grey of the Gallery, the classic fountains, the pigeons, the lions at the feet of Nelson, aloft over the Empire as the Master Builder, as Weygand says Foch is of the world! And then the Strand, with Elizabeth, mother of the Indian Empire, sooty in her niche, but holding the orb in her hands. And then Fleet Street, our old lady, our Mother, who is the Mother of the World.

The spire of Bow, pointed as a Kashmiri temple, the iris tints supplied by the pigeons fluttering on the great dome behind it: these two views equal aught we have seen in a thousand-and-one nights in "furrin" parts.

Daughters of the Empire, she calls on us to cross angry seas, to scale glacier heights, to confront her foes, some-

times in subtle disguise. But she rewards us so long as we do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

> What guerdon do we seek for all
> This work? If once, some worker, toiling hard
> Will find the rapture of a Master's word,
> And pausing gratefully my name recall,
> Tracing his joy, in part, to what he heard
> And learnt from me—it will be rich reward!

The approval of the which one has been wafted world-wide from aspirants to knowledge on sunny plains and snowy steppes, from Indian ashrams and Parisian boulevards, and even from a monastery raised where Nero fished the Anio with a golden net.

Some have sought for personal help in the physical body. Fewer have heard the Music of the Hidden Temple of the Sphere when seated by my side.

Still fewer have known me in the astral form.

Peace To All Beings.

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